

**Dual enrolled students attending mainstream and special schools:
The perspectives of special education teachers**

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DECLARATION

I certify that this dissertation contains no material that has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any institute, college or university. In addition, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the dissertation.

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Abstract

Dual enrolment for students with a disability is a relatively new policy and practice and the number of dual enrolled students is relatively low. In Victoria, it is possible for students with disabilities to be dual enrolled and attend a mainstream school part of the week, and a special school for the remainder of the week. The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the experiences of dual enrolled students from the perspective of teachers in order to identify ways to best support students, and improve their quality of school life. In the absence of literature that focuses specifically on dual enrolled students with disabilities, this study drew from literature on secondary school students with disabilities; the rotations between classes, the changes in teachers, the inconsistency between settings, differences in instructional approaches that were thought to provide parallels to the experiences of dual enrolled students moving between two educational settings during their school week.

Three special education teachers voluntarily participated by way of an interview with the author. The findings from this investigation focused on three main purposes for dual enrolment: (1) *dual enrolment as a trial*, (2) *dual enrolment as social integration*, and (3) *dual enrolment as a compromise*. *Dual enrolment as social integration* was the most recorded reason for dual enrolment arrangements. However, age and awareness of ‘difference’ was seen to be problematic, as was the complex changes to relationships and routines. These findings are similar to current research exploring the inclusion of students with disabilities in secondary school settings. Based on the theory of self-determination, this investigation hypothesises that to achieve relatedness teachers must also address students’ innate desire for autonomy and competency within and across educational settings.

Working as a team across educational settings was the most prominent theme within the data. Four sub-themes were identified: (1) *communication*, (2) *collaboration*, (3) *consistency*, and (4) *support*. All three participants acknowledged the importance of communication; however, this investigation revealed that little to no communication and minimal collaboration took place between mainstream and special teachers. Comments made by participants suggested that the best way to support teachers is to create time and space that allows for greater communication, collaboration and engagement across educational settings.

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DEFINITION OF TERMS	
Terms	Explanation
Dual enrolment	Students enrolled part-time in a mainstream school and part-time in a special needs school. Students attend one educational setting part of the week and the other for the remainder of the week
Self-determination theory	Self-determination theory maintains that human motivation requires consideration of innate psychological needs for competence, autonomy, and relatedness, for an individual to function and grow optimally (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1 Background

A progressive shift in the approach to educating students with disabilities in Australia has evolved from one of segregation in the 1940s, to integration in the 1970s, followed closely by mainstreaming, and proceeding to the current inclusive perspective since the 1990s (Forlin, 2006). Integration began in the 1970s with students with disabilities enrolling in a separate facility or program within a mainstream school, while also being given opportunities to participate in regular classes alongside students without disabilities (Forlin, 2006). This appears to have marked the beginning of a dual enrolment arrangement in Australia. In 2005, the Disability Standards for Education (Australian Government, 2005) mandated that all education providers take reasonable steps to ensure that students with disabilities are able to participate in programs provided by an educational institution on the same basis as a student without a disability. Parts four to eight of the Disability Standards for Education stipulate how education and training is to be made accessible to students with disabilities, and comprises standards for the following five areas: (4) enrolment, (5) participation, (6) curriculum development, accreditation and delivery, (7) student support services, and (8) elimination of harassment and victimisation.

Each of the abovementioned areas addresses the rights of students with disabilities, the legal obligations of educational authorities, institution and education providers, and measures for compliance with the standards. The Standards for curriculum development and accreditation and delivery (Australian Government, 2005) expects education providers ensure the educational program is designed to allow for participation in learning experiences on the same basis as a student without a disability. This resonates with the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation [UNESCO], 1994), which called for schools to recognise and respond to the diverse needs of students with disabilities by determining relevant supports that ensure access to a quality educational program for all individuals.

In Australia, each state and territory has its own special education policy and disability criteria. This investigation was conducted in the state of Victoria, its policies and criteria for entry into special schools are, therefore, the focus this research. The Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct (Victorian Institute of Teaching [VIT], n.d.) identifies a set of principles that are intended to inspire best practice. This document is based on three ethical values: integrity, respect and responsibility (VIT, n.d). Together with the legal obligations and rights of students with disabilities to participate in educational programs on the same basis as a student without a disability, there is an ethical consideration involving a focus on self-determination for students with disability that underpins this investigation. Self-determination makes a significant difference in the lives of students with disabilities and comprises of a set of skills and behaviours that have been linked to an improved quality of life, and positive post-school outcomes (Smith, Beyer, Polloway, Smith & Patton, 2008). With this in mind, the present study drew on understanding of self-determination as a framework for the research design and analysis. The study also explores the ways teachers can contribute to a positive educational experience for dual enrolled students, and the ways self-determination is, or could be, promoted across a mainstream and a special setting.

1.2 Problem statement

The Victorian Department of Education and Training School Policy and Advisory Guide (2016a) allows a principal or regional director to approve and accept individual enrolments at a reduced attendance, thereby enabling dual enrolment. This makes it possible for students with disabilities to attend a mainstream school part of the week, and a special school for the remainder of the week. *The Program for Students with Disabilities: Guidelines for Schools 2016* (Department of Education and Training, 2015) further facilitates dual enrolment by allocating financial assistance to both schools on a pro-rata basis.

Although dual enrolment is relatively new in policy and practice and the number of dual enrolled students appears to be relatively low, it is gaining in momentum. For example, in 2016 the Tasmanian Government released a draft Education Bill that proposes students with disabilities be given an opportunity to enrol in both a mainstream government or non-government school and a special

school. However, a review of five databases including A+ Education, APAFT, ERIC, PsychINFO, and Wiley Online Library using a range of terms specifying students with disabilities and dual enrolment did not identify any literature that focuses on the actual experiences of dual enrolled students with disabilities, or their general and special teachers, or ways to best meet and accommodate their needs. Without this type of research, it is difficult for education providers to determine what constitutes best practice for promoting learning and development for dual enrolled students. And second whether dual enrolment leads to positive post-school outcomes.

1.3 Purpose statement

The current investigation was inspired by a five-week professional experience placement in the Bachelor of Education (Primary) program at the University of Tasmania. Professional experience integrates theory and practice, it provides pre-service teachers with the opportunity to demonstrate their skills and knowledge and “develop confidence in catering for a range of different student learning needs...” (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership [AITSL], 2014, para. 2). It was during this time that I was faced with the challenge of educating a dual enrolled student. This experience encouraged me to develop my knowledge, skills and competency in catering for the needs of dual enrolled students, and in doing so I found there was no published literature that investigated the experiences of dual enrolled students, or reports on best practices for educating these students across a mainstream and special setting. The aim of this study therefore, was to identify ways to best support dual enrolled students and improve their quality of school life and post-school outcomes. This investigation was designed to open a collaborative dialogue between the researcher and the participants with a focus on sharing ideas and strategies that best support dual enrolled students with disabilities.

1.4 Theoretical perspective

A qualitative investigation that focuses on exploring and capturing the multiple, constructed, and subjective perspectives of those involved in this study (O’Leary, 2014) was chosen as the most suitable approach for this work. Implicit in the formulation of the research question was a concern for maintaining each individual’s personal account of the experience through a commitment to in-depth understanding. This concern for the explication of individual cases is evident

throughout the research design (Figure 3.1). Including the perspectives of three special teachers from three special schools encouraged an in-depth exploration of dual enrolment from multiple perspectives.

1.5 *Research question*

The following research question was framed to explore and understand the experiences of dual enrolled students from the perspectives of the classroom teachers:

How can teachers contribute to a positive educational experience for students with a dual enrolment across a mainstream and a special setting?

1.6 *Summary*

This chapter has discussed the significance of this research in terms of addressing the noticeable gap in the literature. The purpose of this study is to explore the experiences of dual enrolled students from the perspectives of their teachers in order to identify ways to best support students in their learning.

Chapter two reviews the published literature in greater detail, and identifies the tentative conceptual framework that was used to anticipate and explore some of the benefits and challenges associated with dual enrolment. A brief discussion of the theoretical perspective assumed in this study has acknowledged the philosophical foundations that directed this investigation. This conversation will resume in Chapter three with an in-depth analysis of the research design and data analysis methods. Chapter four presents the results of this investigation, and Chapter five concludes with a discussion of the implications of results.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

2.1 *Introduction*

This chapter reviews the limited body of literature on the educational experiences of students with a dual enrolment from the perspective of students and their teachers. It provides an explanation for the decision to draw on studies that are focused on secondary school students with disabilities in exploring issues likely to be relevant to dual enrolment. This is followed by a discussion focused on inclusion in secondary schools which contextualises the focus in this project on developing self-determination skills in students with disabilities who attend both a mainstream school and a special school.

2.2 *Research strategy*

In order to identify articles investigating the experiences of dual enrolled students with disabilities, and/or their teachers, a systematic search of A+ Education, APAFT, ERIC, PsychINFO, and Wiley Online Library databases was conducted. The search terms entered into ERIC and PsychINFO used the default setting ‘Anywhere.’ When searching Wiley Online Library, the ‘Keyword’ operation was used to search the author provided keywords. The default setting ‘All fields’ and ‘All terms’ were used when searching terms in A+ Education and APAFT. Quotations marks were used in all databases to search for exact expressions when searching variations of the following two terms: “students with disabilities” and “dual enrolment.” Where the options were available, all articles in all databases were limited to ‘peer-reviewed’ and/or ‘full text only’ or ‘linked full text.’ Table 2.1 illustrates the research strategies entered into each database. The following search criterion applied to all articles: (a) the article investigated the experiences of dual enrolled students with disabilities, and/or their teachers.

The search terms (Table 2.2) and strategies (Figure 2.1) are shown here to indicate the parameters of the topic, to demonstrate the efforts undertaken to access and engage with relevant literature, and to highlight the dearth of research literature on the topic of dual enrolments. The following search terms were entered consecutively into each of the databases shown in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1 *Database research strategies*

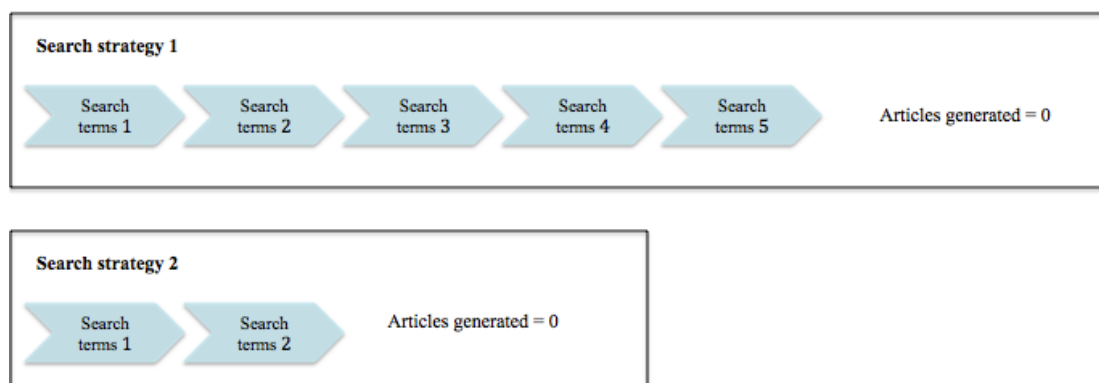
Name of database	Search term operation	Search limitations
A+ Education	'All fields' 'All terms'	Full text only
APAFT	'All fields' 'All terms'	Full text only
ERIC	'Anywhere'	Peer reviewed/linked full text
PsychINFO	'Anywhere'	Peer reviewed
Wiley Online Library	'Keyword'	N/A

Table 2.2 *Search term strategies*

Search terms 1	
"students with disabilities"	OR "disabled students"
OR "students with special educational needs"	OR "pupils with disabilities"
OR "pupils with special educational needs"	OR "young people with disabilities"
OR "youth with disabilities"	OR "young people with special educational needs"
OR "youth with special educational needs"	OR "students with special needs"
OR "pupils with special needs"	OR "young people with special needs"
OR "youth with special needs"	OR "children with special needs"
OR "children with disabilities"	OR "children with special educational needs"
OR "disabled children"	
Search terms 2	
"dual enrolment"	OR "dual enrollment"
OR "part-time enrolment"	OR "part-time enrollment"
OR "dual enrolled"	
Search terms 3	
mainstream school	mainstream school
OR regular education	OR regular education
Search terms 4	
special school	OR special schools
OR special education	OR specialist school
OR specialist schools	OR special
Search terms 5	
primary school	OR elementary school
OR middle school	OR secondary school
OR high school	

The search terms (Table 2.2) and strategies (Figure 2.1) are shown here to indicate the parameters of the topic, to demonstrate the efforts undertaken to access and engage with relevant literature, and to highlight the dearth of research literature on the topic of dual enrolments. The search terms were entered consecutively into each of the databases shown above in Table 2.1.

Figure 2.1 Search strategies



A third search using the following keywords: “Special schools” and “dual enrolment” produced one article by Prunty, Dupont, and McDaid (2012). This journal article had already been located when conducting a review of literature that investigates the perspectives of students with disabilities. An ancestral search of this article did not identify any further sources that met the criteria.

2.3 Findings from the literature review

Prunty, Dupont and McDaid (2012) briefly reported on the experiences of two students in a dual enrolment arrangement, one attending a primary school, the other a secondary school. This was part of their longitudinal study which investigated the schooling experiences of 38 students with disabilities. One case study participant attended a mainstream school one afternoon a week with the objective of making friends. When asked if he liked the experience he replied by stating that he did make “some friends” (Prunty et al., 2012, p. 33). Their second case study participant who undertook a dual enrolment expressed a preference to attend only one school. Prunty et al. (2012) commented that “many” (p. 33) of the 34 children who participated in the focus group interviews were against the idea of attending two schools. The authors also pointed out that unlike the two case study participants, the students involved in the focus group interviews had not actually experienced dual enrolment, but were

asked whether they would like to attend two different schools. Although the article reported very little on the actual experiences of the dual enrolled students, it did identify case studies as a suitable methodology for this study, and interviews as a valid method for data collection.

In the absence of literature that focuses specifically on dual enrolled primary students with disabilities, this study will draw from literature that focuses on secondary school students with disabilities and transitions in order to anticipate and explore some of the benefits and challenges that are likely to be associated with dual enrolment. In particular, the rotations between classes and the change in teacher in secondary school settings may be similar to those experienced by dual enrolled primary students, and the inconsistency between the settings and differences in instructional approaches may be similar to the potential inconsistencies between the teachers of dual enrolled students.

Dual enrolment appears to be increasing in popularity, despite there being little research examining the learning and development potential of dual enrolled students. Examining literature that focuses on secondary school students with disabilities and school transitions makes it possible to develop a context for exploring dual enrolment and identify possible inherent issues and probable merits. As mentioned in the introductory chapter, this research is based on the analysis of key themes identified in the remaining sections of this literature review. The key themes (competency, relatedness, autonomy) provided a basis for predicting what theory upon which the investigation should focus (self-determination theory), and what issues might influence the experiences of students who attend two schools. These themes were continually compared and revised against the reported experiences of the participants, by the participants, and during the more interpretative data analysis phase (see Chapter 3). In this way, the literature included in this review acted as a proxy in order to develop a way of exploring a new area for study.

2.4 *School transitions*

The following search terms, and variations of these terms, were entered into four electronic databases (A+ Education, APAFT, ERIC, PsychINFO): “students with disabilities” and “transition from primary to secondary school.” Five articles were located. A similar search was entered into Google scholar and this produced a long list of literature that explored post-school transitions of young adults with disabilities.

As previously discussed, full inclusion is relatively new to Australia's educational policies and this may explain the lack of literature available that specifically explored primary to secondary school transitions for students with disabilities. The transition from primary to secondary school is challenging for all students "but the challenges for students with particular learning needs are exacerbated by the complex interactions and changes to relationships, routines, expectations of teachers, and the needs of each learner" (Moni & Hay, 2012, p. 329). The complex interactions and relationships associated with transitioning from primary to secondary school for students with disabilities would suggest that further investigation is needed in order to better facilitate goals for inclusion.

Transitioning from primary to secondary school can impact upon student wellbeing. In a longitudinal study of primary to secondary school transitions in Scotland, West, Sweeting and Young (2010) reported that students who were less able, and students with lower self-esteem were vulnerable to poorer school transitions. West and colleagues (2010) concluded that these characteristics were predictors of less successful school transitions. The authors noted that the study was conducted one year after the primary to secondary school transition took place, and cautioned that the results could combine the experience of the initial transition with the students' current situation. Nevertheless, West et al. (2010) raise an important, yet unanswered question that is relevant to this study and the experiences of dual enrolled students. That is, are transitions episodic, with a beginning and an end point, or are they a continuing process? If transitions are episodic then it may be possible to define a time frame for focused intervention that adequately supports students to navigate school and peer social systems. If by contrast transitions are an ongoing process, then support must also be continuous. Given that dual enrolled students' transition from one educational setting to another on a weekly basis, it is reasonable to assume that support would need to be ongoing, or at the very least, would need to occur at the beginning of the school year as students learn to navigate between two new classroom.

In their review of literature exploring how school transitions impact upon students' psychosocial adjustment, Hughes et al. (2014) noted that a range of psychosocial problems such as depression, anxiety, loneliness, and anti-social behaviour could manifest for typically developing students and students with disabilities during school transitions. This corresponds with the results from West et

al. (2010) that “poorer school and peer transitions can have long-term consequences for mental health” (p. 45). Additionally, Hughes et al. (2014) reported that students with disabilities remained worried about bullying and victimisation post-transition. In contrast to West et al. (2010), Hughes et al. (2014) identified lower socio-economic status, lower academic ability, gender and race as contributing risk factors to poorer school transitions for typically developing students and students with disabilities. Hughes et al. (2014) also acknowledged indirect factors such as family, peer influences and personality, as having had a positive or negative impact on school transitions, stating that disability could be a direct or indirect contributing risk factor to poorer transitions. Importantly, Hughes et al. (2014) commented that not all students with disabilities would experience poor transitions or suffer from negative adjustments.

Maras and Aveling (2006) identified several features of school transitions that may be problematic for all students moving from primary to secondary school. These included changes in teaching styles, the structure of the school day and concerns about interacting with peers. A possible conjecture is that dual enrolled students are exposed to the aforementioned issues on a weekly basis, and this may have a compounding affect. Transition interventions, peer mentors and guides, teacher support, social and academic support, and support for parents were identified as ways to encourage positive secondary school transitions for students without disabilities (Maras & Aveling, 2006). Whereas, continuity of support, communication between teachers, parents and the student, as well as tailored intervention plans were identified as beneficial to the successful transition of secondary school students with disabilities (Maras & Aveling, 2006). The challenge for the teachers of dual enrolled students is to communicate across educational settings, amongst a number of different support staff, and in consultation with parents and the dual enrolled student.

Although the term ‘inclusion’ was not clearly defined by Maras and Aveling (2006) their research findings showed that the student participants focused more on maintaining continuity of support and addressing their own anxiety. As Maras and Aveling (2006) suggested, these are not necessarily issues of inclusion *per se*, but, as the above findings indicate, matters of a more practical nature. Although students with disabilities are not a homogenous group, research into school transitions for students with disabilities suggest that it may be beneficial to provide dual enrolled students with continuity of support across educational institutions (e.g. same speech

pathologist, occupational therapist, physiotherapist) and continuity of support within each context (e.g. same educational support officer). The stability provided by familiar support staff may, in turn, reduce some anxiety felt by the students as they move from one school to another.

2.5 *Inclusion in secondary schools*

The following search terms, and variations of these terms, were entered into four databases (A+ Education, APAFT, ERIC, PsychINFO): students with disabilities AND inclusive AND high school OR secondary school. This produced a large volume of literature related to inclusive practices in educational settings. The literature included in this review focused specifically on inclusive practices in secondary schools, and co-teaching students with disabilities in secondary schools. The latter was thought to be of relevance to this study as collaboration between a general and special teacher is required in a dual enrolment arrangement.

As noted by Moni and Hay (2012), the change to Australia's educational policy has led to greater diversity in secondary schools, and a greater diversity in responses and approaches to accommodating students with disabilities across, and within secondary schools. Pearce (2009), and Pearce, Campbell-Evans and Gray (2010) commented that inclusion in primary school is much more successful than in secondary school due to the focus on curriculum, examinations, and the large numbers of students in secondary classrooms. Moni and Hay (2012) suggest that secondary schools are efficient in dealing with large groups of independent students and may, therefore, find it difficult to accommodate the needs of small groups or individual students. Accommodating dual enrolled students in secondary school settings may be a more inherently complex process compared to primary school settings, however, whether one is more successful than the other is yet to be determined.

Administrative and teacher support plays a critical role in inclusive schools and in the decision-making processes of parents of students with disabilities. Mann, Cuskelly, and Moni (2015) discussed the integral role of "societal conditions and institutional constraints" (p. 1415) on choice making, and outline three interconnected dimensions to parental decision-making processes: (1) the degree to which parents feel they are free to choose a school, (2) the impact of help and advice from professionals in making informed choices, and (3) whether parental choices are

influenced by emotion or objective and rational thought (p. 1415). Their investigation reported that the decision making-process was more complex when special schools were an option, and a lack of access to information further complicated this process. Mann, Cuskelly, and Moni (2015) concluded that the final decision was sometimes more a matter of compromise than active choice. In their review of effective inclusive classroom characteristics, Mastropieri and Scruggs (2001) identified administrative support as one of the seven variables that appear to be associated with inclusive primary and secondary mainstream classrooms. These are: (1) administrative support, (2) support from special education personnel, (3) an accepting and positive classroom atmosphere, (4) appropriate curriculum, (5) effective general teaching skills, (6) peer assistance, and (7) disability specific teaching skills. In their discussion of the challenges associated with inclusion in secondary schools, Pearce and Forlin (2005) and Pearce et al. (2010) supported the findings of Mastropieri and Scruggs (2001) and added that knowledge of the student and knowledge of the educational implications of the student's disability are important factors that support inclusivity in the classroom.

Pearce et al. (2010) explored inclusion from the perspectives of 31 secondary school teachers and found that the majority of teachers thought that "special education knowledge or access to special education expertise" (p. 21) would be of great benefit. This affirms Mastropieri and Scruggs (2001) suggestion that collaboration between special education personnel and general teachers is a valuable way to support inclusion in mainstream classrooms. Still, Pearce and Forlin (2005) identified a lack of "time, opportunity or encouragement for teachers to work collaboratively or prepare programs together" (p. 95) as a barrier to inclusive secondary schools. This apparent lack of time, opportunity, and encouragement may also be an issue for the teachers of dual enrolled students who are required to communicate across a mainstream and special setting and in collaboration with support staff and paraprofessionals.

Schumaker and Deshler (1998) reviewed the potential barriers to inclusion and access to the curriculum for students with mild intellectual disabilities attending secondary school. Their findings suggested that the amount of time it takes to teach skills exceeds the amount of time allocated to each class, with the pedagogical approach unaccommodating to the intensive, small group instruction required to ensure mastery of skills for students with disabilities. Weiss and Lloyd (2002)

supported these findings in their exploration of six special teachers who co-taught students with disabilities in secondary mathematics and English classes. Co-teaching is viewed as a workable solution to bridging the gap between the content knowledge of general teachers and the expertise of special teachers in order to provide students with disabilities access to the general curriculum in a mainstream setting (Strieker, Gills, & Zong, 2013). With this in mind, collaboration between a general and special teacher of a dual enrolled student could be a valuable way to assist education providers when taking reasonable steps to ensure students receive access to, and participate in, a quality educational program on the same basis as a student without a disability.

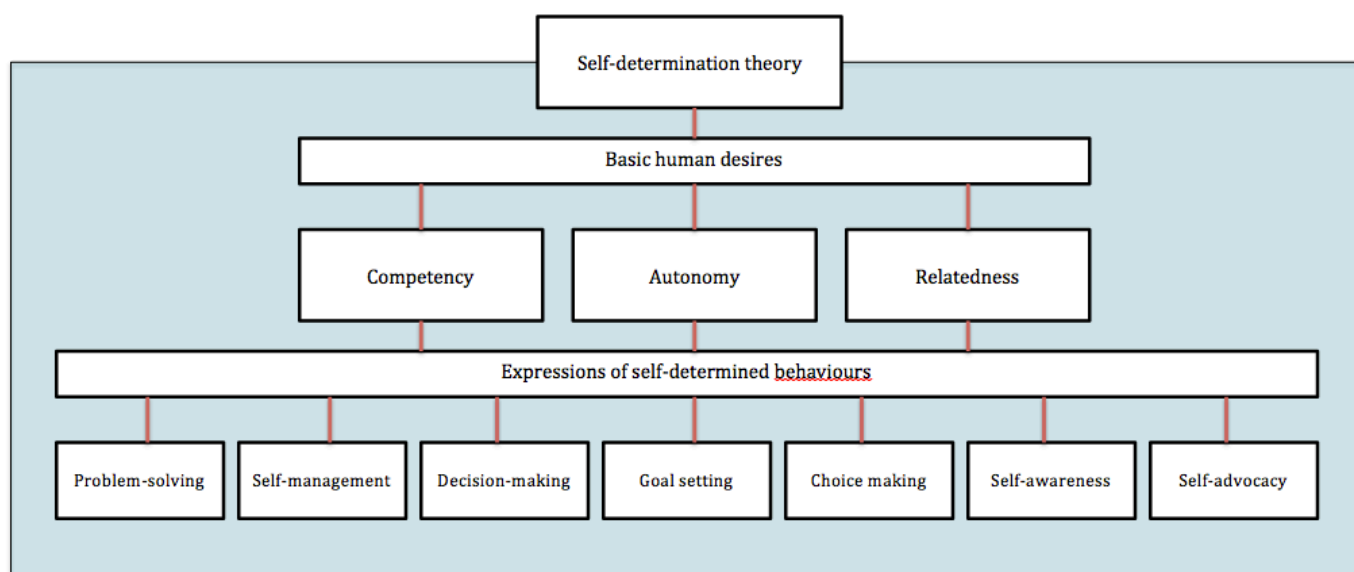
Weiss and Lloyd (2002) also confirmed in their findings the need for smaller groups of intensive instruction. However, they claimed that on the occasions where teachers separated students into smaller sub-groups, the instruction did not necessarily include direct instruction on skill development, nor did it result in improved student participation; instead, it resulted in reduced peer interaction time. Similarly, Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier, and Ryan (1991) claimed that optimal learning takes place with the flexible use and application of knowledge, and through the development of conceptual understanding, which Schumaker and Deshler (1998) contend requires more time and intensive instruction for students with disabilities. Deci et al. (1991) went on to assert that an equally important aspect of education is building students' sense of self-worth and personal agency, stating that "[t]he highest quality of conceptual learning seems to occur under the same motivational conditions that promote personal growth and adjustment" (Deci et al., 1991, p. 326), and this they attribute to the development of self-determination skills. In the previous discussion on school transitions, it was noted that students with disabilities are vulnerable to poor psychosocial adjustment. The development of self-determination skills may be a way to counteract this observation.

2.6 *Self-determination theory*

The importance of developing self-determination skills in students with disabilities is well documented (Carter, Lane, Pierson & Glaeser, 2006; Carter, Lane, Pierson, & Stang, 2008; Deci, & Ryan, 2000; Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier & Ryan, 1991; Field, Martin, Miller, Ward, & Wehmeyer, 1998; Field, Sarver & Shaw, 2003; Palmer, Wehmeyer, Gipson, & Agran, 2004; Schumaker & Deshler, 1998; Shogren,

Wehmeyer, Palmer, Soukup, Little, Garner & Lawrence, 2008; Wehmeyer, Palmer, Agran, Mithaug & Martin, 2000). Self-determination theory focuses on the innate psychological needs of individuals to create the motivational conditions that lead to personal growth, adjustment and conceptual learning (Deci, & Ryan, 2000; Deci et al., 1991). This occurs when the social environment nurtures the need for competence, relatedness, and autonomy (Figure 2.2).

Figure 2.2 Self-determination theory



Deci et al. (1991) proposed that self-determined motivation should be given precedence in education and suggests teachers offer students choices, reduce teacher control, acknowledge feelings, make resources available that facilitate decision-making, and assist with the independent completion of tasks. Developing students' sense of competency, autonomy, and relatedness may be one way to promote more successful transitions and reduce the risk of negative psychosocial adjustment for students with disabilities. The earlier question of whether transitions were an episode or a continuous process raised concerns for how long all students should be assisted in navigating school and social systems. A continued focus on developing competency, autonomy, and relatedness could be one way to support students irrespective of whether there is a defined timeframe for transitions to take place.

For students with a dual enrolment, it may be important that self-determination skills be developed across educational settings. In particular, both

classrooms should be supportive of developing students' autonomy as this can facilitate the development of intrinsic motivation and "perceived competence, and self-esteem" (Deci et al. 1991, p. 337). In their case study exploring students' experiences of self-determination in inclusive high schools, Eisenman, Pell, Poidel and Pleet-Odle (2015) reinforced the importance of "autonomy-supportive teachers" (p. 110) in developing students' belief in their ability to succeed, or self-efficacy. Eisenman et al. (2015) also commented that academic success alongside students without a disability increased student's sense of self-efficacy. For dual enrolled students, the opportunity to attend an inclusive mainstream school and to experience academic success could be one way to enhance their sense of self-efficacy and lessen the impact of possible negative psychosocial adjustment, and boost students' sense of competency.

Carter et al. (2008) investigated the practices of 340 teachers in promoting self-determination. In their study they asked teachers (a) to evaluate the importance of teaching seven elements of self-determination skills (problem-solving, self-management, decision making, goal setting, choice making, self-awareness, self-advocacy), (b) to evaluate the extent to which they actually teach those skills. They also explored whether general and special teachers similarly prioritise the development of self-determination, and whether they have had similar opportunities to do so across mainstream and special settings. Their findings suggested that general and special teachers place the highest level of importance on the same three areas of self-determination in their instruction, namely: problem solving, self-management and decision-making. Furthermore, Carter et al. (2008) concluded that the shared priorities were optimistic and supportive of general and special teachers' ability to align curriculum planning and instruction.

The findings from Carter et al. (2008) also suggest that collaboration between a general and special teacher of a dual enrolled student is feasible. Although Carter et al. (2008) cautioned that the study was based on the teachers' self-reports of instructional practices and highlighted the fact that no specific instructional method or strategies were observed or objectively measured. They also noted that observational methods are lacking in research that explores the development of self-determination skills in students with disabilities. This is consistent with the claim made by Shogren et al. (2008) that self-determination literature is predominantly theoretical with only a

small number of studies assessing the development of self-determination in students with disabilities and the instructional programs that promote self-determination.

The literature examined in the previous paragraphs has revealed that supporting an individual's innate desire for competence, relatedness, and autonomy can facilitate the motivational conditions that promote learning and psychosocial adjustment. This can be achieved when teachers focus on developing student's self-determination skills, knowledge, and beliefs. Yet, "[s]elf-determination depends on students' capacities and opportunities" (Wolman et al. 1994, p. 5). Lee et al. (2012) have described 'capacity' as personal characteristics such as cognitive ability, which is influenced by learning and development, and 'opportunity' as environmental factors and experiences.

Using the Arc's Self-Determination Scale (Wehmeyer, 1995), Wehmeyer and Garner (2003) identified intellectual capacity to be less significant in predicting self-determination than choice and opportunity. Lee et al. (2012) corroborated these findings using the Arc's scale (Wehmeyer, 1995) and the student version of the AIR self-determination scale (Wolman et al. 1994). Providing opportunities and experiences within the classroom in which students with disabilities can exert control, or where there is a sense of perceived control through choice making, can enhance the development of self-determination irrespective of intellectual capacity (Wehmeyer & Garner, 2003). With this in mind, to improve the development of self-determination in dual enrolled students, both types of teachers should provide opportunities and supports that enable choice making and control for dual enrolled students to acquire self-determination skills across educational settings. Dual enrolled students regularly transition from one school to another, and this provides an incidental and highly valuable opportunity for students to use and refine their self-determination skills, and to experience autonomy, competency, and relatedness in more than one context.

2.7 Summary

An extensive search of five electronic databases established that there is a dearth of literature investigating the experiences of dual enrolled students with disabilities. Consequently, this review focused on synthesising the results of studies that investigated secondary school students with disabilities and transitions, inclusion in secondary school settings, and self-determination theory. This made it possible to

anticipate and explore some of the potential benefits and challenges associated with dual enrolment.

A review of literature relating to students with disabilities transitioning to secondary school revealed the “highest quality of conceptual learning” (Deci et al. 1991, p. 326) occurs when environmental conditions promote self-determination. This is because developing self-determination skills and behaviours address students’ innate desire for competency, relatedness, and autonomy. The development of self-determination skills was identified as one way to support students during school transitions, and a possible way to counteract poor psychosocial adjustment.

Collaboration between a special and general teacher of a dual enrolled student could be a valuable way to share expertise and support inclusion. While research suggests that both mainstream and special teachers are aware of the importance developing students’ self-determination skills (Carter et al. 2008), there is a lack of observational methods designed to investigate the development of self-determination, and limited literature assessing the development of self-determination and instructional programs promoting self-determination, in students with disabilities. It is within this body of literature that this study posits itself and sets out to explore how teachers can contribute to a positive educational experience for students with a dual enrolment across a mainstream and a special setting.

CHAPTER THREE

Method

3.1 *Introduction*

This study aims to identify ways to best support dual enrolled students and improve their quality of school life. A further aim was to find ways to best support their teachers in doing so. The research question, How can teachers contribute to a positive educational experience for students with a dual enrolment across a mainstream and a special setting? was framed to achieve this intent.

The ontological assumption that there are multiple perspectives of reality and many ways of assessing and understanding the nature of existence and reality (Grey, 2014; O’Leary, 2014) was adopted when answering the research question. This perspective informed the epistemological position (Crotty, 1998; Grey, 2014) adopted in this study, which, in turn, provided the overarching structure and foundation for developing the research design. Figure 3.1 draws on a number of key readings (Crotty, 1998; Grey, 2014; Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009; Thomas, 2013) to illustrate this relationship. Figure 3.1 also shows how the methodology and methods chosen are suitable to answering the research question, and suitable to meeting the aims of this study. The following section provides a detailed justification for the research design, and describes the participants and ethical considerations involved in this study.

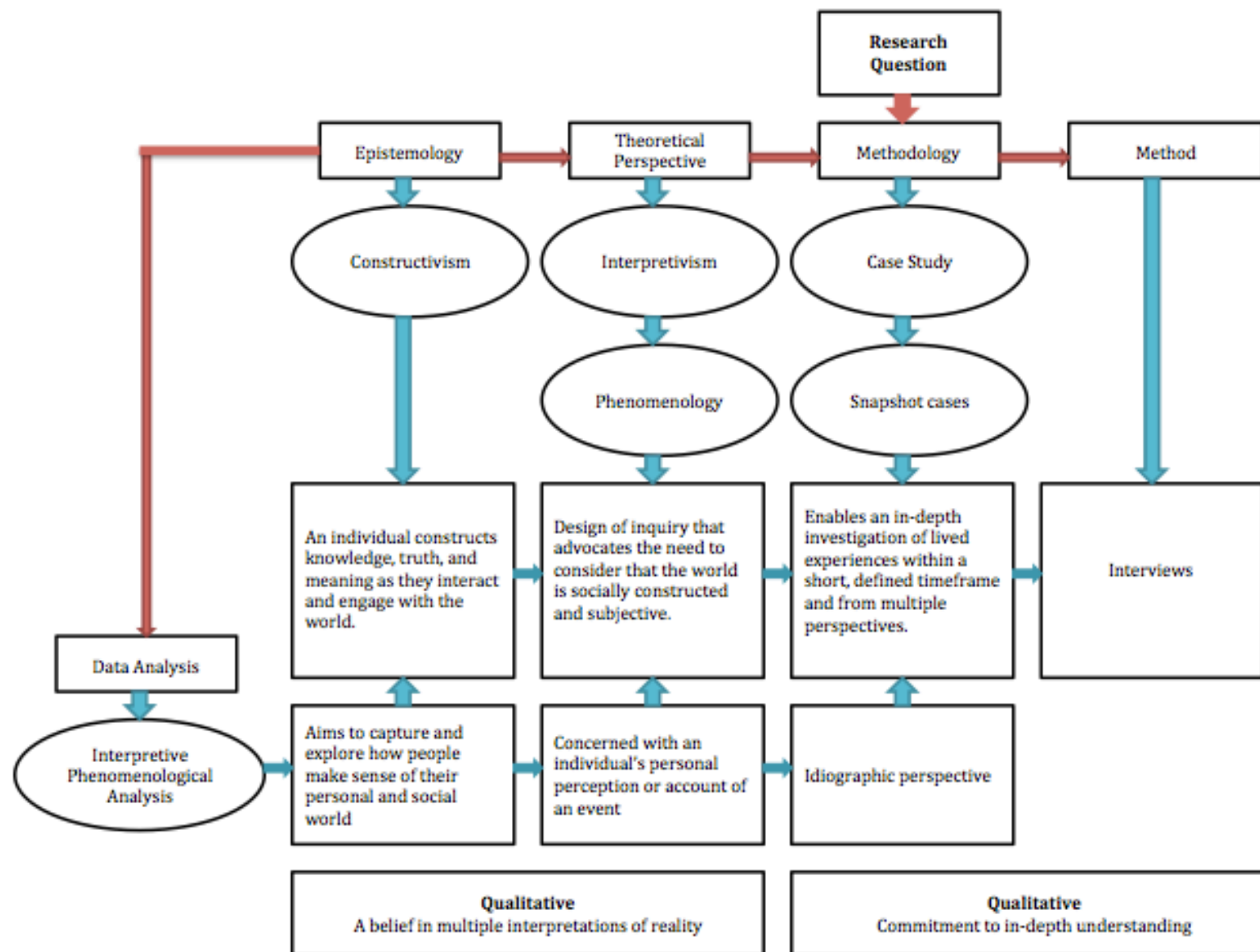


Figure 3.1 Research design.

3.2 *Research design*

Quantitative research seeks to objectively test theories and hypotheses by examining quantifiable relationships among variables using deductive logic and existing data and survey techniques (Creswell, 2014; O’Leary, 2014). There is limited literature that explores the lived experiences of dual enrolled primary students with disabilities, and no established quantitative variables that can be used to develop hypotheses, or measure, or observe relationships (Creswell, 2014). Qualitative research, in contrast, uses an inductive process to identify patterns, theories, or generalisations from detailed data (Creswell, 2014; O’Leary, 2014). As discussed in Chapter one, this investigation was designed to open a collaborative dialogue between the researcher and the participants with a focus on sharing ideas and strategies. It was, therefore, determined that a qualitative approach, and the methods associated with qualitative research, would best facilitate this intention.

The aim of this study is to explore dual enrolment from the perspective of the primary classroom teachers. This directed the choice of paradigm towards an epistemological model of constructivism (Creswell, 2014; Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006; O’Leary, 2014). A constructivist paradigm maintains that an individual constructs knowledge, truth, and meaning as they interact and engage with the world (Crotty, 1998; Grey, 2014). Gaining an insight into how the teachers of dual enrolled primary students engage, interact and construct meaning will assist with identifying valid ways that teachers can contribute to creating a positive learning experience. With this in mind, a constructivist approach fulfills the aims of this study.

The interplay between the aims of the study, the research question, and the paradigm further orientated the research design towards an interpretivist approach, aligning best with a phenomenological theoretical perspective (Crotty, 1998; Grey, 2014). The intention of the research question is to explore the lived experiences of classroom teachers. Interpretivism is idiographic, or focused on the individual, in that it is primarily concerned with how a person socially and experientially constructs meaning and makes sense of their world (Crotty, 1998). Phenomenological research suggests that a person’s view of the world is socially constructed and subjective, and focuses on identifying, understanding, describing, and maintaining an individual’s subjective experience (Crotty, 1998; Grey, 2014; O’Leary, 2014). This perspective is congruent with a constructivist paradigm. An individual’s subjective interpretation and perception of a lived experience then becomes the starting point in understanding

and attributing meaning to idiographic, or personal experiences. Therefore, this study will explore the lived experiences of dual enrolled students from the perspective of the primary classroom teacher in order to determine ways to best support students and teachers.

Interpretive phenomenological analysis [IPA] was selected over other qualitative analysis approaches as it is congruent with the epistemological position of the research question (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009), and is compatible with the research design and aims of the study (see 3.7 Data analysis). Inductive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Grey, 2014) is also well-suited with the epistemological position adopted, and is suitable to use when there have been no prior studies. Inductive thematic analysis uses a “low level of interpretation” (Vaismoradi, Turunen & Bondas, 2013, p. 399) and does not develop an analytic narrative (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Grey, 2014). In contrast, IPA outlines a range of analytic procedures that enables the development of codes and themes for each data item, and for each individual participant (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). This made it possible to maintain the idiographic focus of this study.

3.3 Methodology

Phenomenological research (Grey, 2014) is a qualitative strategy that produces rich and thick, or detailed descriptions, of people’s lived experiences (Grey, 2014). Case studies (Walliman, 2006) allowed for this type of intensive investigation to occur. As the project was bound by time, snapshot cases (Thomas, 2013) enabled an in-depth investigation of the lived experiences of teachers. This occurred within a short, defined timeframe and from multiple perspectives to present a holistic picture grounded in day-to-day experience.

As explored in the previous chapter, there is no in-depth published literature that explores the lived experiences of dual enrolled students with disabilities and/or their teachers. Stebbins (2001) argued that when little or no knowledge about a group or situation exists researchers should conduct an exploration. Exploration, as described by Stebbins (2001) is a “purposive, systematic, prearranged” (p. 3) investigation that leads to the “discovery of generalizations” (p. 3) and theory from data. This study can be thought of as the initial research in what will hopefully be a concatenated exploration, or chain of studies, that culminates and increases in detail,

scope, and validity to generate grounded theory (Stebbins, 1992, 2001). This study was limited by the ethical sourcing of eligible student participants. This restricted the investigation to only include the perspectives of special education primary classroom teachers. Future research should focus on directly capturing student voice and the experiences of mainstream primary teachers.

The small number of cases included in this study forgoes generalisability (O’Leary, 2014) for in-depth exploration; however, this approach remains congruent with the aims of the study, the intention behind the research question, and the research design. Eisenman et al. (2015) used thick descriptions to support readers “consideration of the transferability or applicability of the case particulars to other settings” (p. 106). Like the investigation conducted by Eisenman et al. (2015), the use of rich descriptions in this study aims to achieve verisimilitude, or plausibility, so the reader can assess and evaluate the transferability of the research findings to their specific situation (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). Through subsequent studies it would be possible to add to the research findings and identify more generalisable claims (Pringle, Drummond, McLafferty & Hendry, 2011; Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009).

3.4 Ethical considerations

3.4.1 Gaining permission to conduct research

It was originally anticipated that this investigation would include the perspectives of dual enrolled students with disabilities who were under the age of eighteen. The National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research outlines the “values, principles and themes that must inform the design, ethical review and conduct of all human research ” (National Health and Medical Research Council (Australia) [NHMRC], 2014, p. 50), and provides guidelines that are specific to research involving children and young people and people with a cognitive impairment, an intellectual disability, or a mental illness. In compliance with the NHMRC and the Social Science Human Research Ethics Committee a full committee application was completed. Ethics approval was received from the Human Research Ethics Committee (Tasmania) Network (reference H0015334). Permission to conduct research in Victorian government schools was granted by the Department of Education and Training (Victoria) (2015_002946). Copies of the notifications of

approval have been included as appendices (see Appendix A and Appendix B respectively).

An amendment to the approved project was made and subsequently approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee (Tasmania) Network (Appendix C) and the Department of Education and Training (Victoria) (Appendix D). The title of the project, recruitment procedures, data collection procedures, principal information letter, teacher information letter and consent form were changed to reflect the new direction of the project and to maintain adherence privacy laws.

3.4.2 Assessment of risk

While there were no anticipated risks of harm for participants, there was a chance that during the interviews the teachers may have experienced a level of anxiety as a result of knowing that their actions and/or responses were being observed and analysed. To manage and minimise this issue, the participants were advised through their information sheets and consent forms (Appendix E) that their participation was voluntary and that they were free to withdraw from participation at any point, and without consequence. Prior to conducting the interviews, the participating teachers were reminded of the aims of the study and were reassured that the purpose of the study was not to judge or compare, but to learn. All participants were also informed of their right to decline answering any or all interview questions or ask that the interviews cease at any point, without consequence.

3.4.3 Privacy

To ensure anonymity, pseudonyms and only basic demographic information were used to describe the participants. Transcripts were kept in electronic files accessed via a password-protected computer. The original data will not be shared because the participants only consented to allow the researcher to hear the audio recordings of their interviews. The original data will be secured until destruction after five years to ensure the participants' confidentiality is maintained.

3.4.4 Consent

The classroom teachers signed and returned the consent forms to their school principal or emailed them directly to the investigator. All participants, including the

school principals, were invited to discuss the research and to ask questions about the study prior to returning the signed consent forms and before the interview took place.

3.5 *Participants*

3.5.1 *Eligibility for participation*

To be eligible to participate in this study, teachers needed to have taught a dual enrolled student in a Victorian government mainstream school or a Victorian government primary special school.

3.5.2 *Recruitment process*

This investigation originally aimed to include the perspectives of dual enrolled students, mainstream and special education primary teachers. The following section describes the recruitment process and the alternative arrangements made to ensure meaningful data was gathered from those who were willing to share their experience and perspective on the topic of dual enrolment.

Ten special primary school principals were contacted via email (Appendix F) and invited to facilitate participation of relevant students and staff in this study. After confirming the enrolment of students who were eligible to participate, and after agreeing to take part in this study, the school principal, or assistant principal, was then asked to forward information sheets and consent forms to the relevant classroom teacher (Appendix E), and the legal guardians of the student participant (Appendix G). Included in the information pack handed to the student's legal guardians was the student information and consent form (Appendix H). Two special school principals agreed to allow their schools to be involved in this study and two primary teachers returned their signed consent forms. Unfortunately, no parents formalised consent for their child to participate in this study and no mainstream primary schools agreed to take part in this study. As this investigation was bound by the time constraints of an honour's project, an alternative pathway into investigating dual enrolment was decided upon. Data was gathered from the perspective of three special education primary classroom teachers who were willing to share their experiences and views on the topic of dual enrolment. The change in focus allowed the investigation to include the perspective of teachers who currently had a dual enrolled student in their classroom as well as teachers who had taught a dual enrolled student in the past.

An amendment to the approved project (see 3.5.1 Gaining permission to conduct research) allowed the investigator to contact mainstream schools located within the catchment area of a specific special school located which was within close proximity to the investigator. The special schools that did not respond to the initial invitation and mainstream school principals located within the identified area were contacted via email (Appendix I) and invited to facilitate participation of relevant staff in this study. After agreeing to partake in this study, the special school principal was then asked to forward information sheets and consent forms to the relevant classroom teachers (Appendix J). Prior to collecting signed consent forms, the school principals and classroom teachers were reminded of the aims of this study and reassured that the purpose was not to judge or compare teaching practices. The school principals and the participating classroom teachers were invited to raise any concerns they may have prior to confirming their consent to participate in this study. This recruitment strategy resulted in a third special school principal agreeing to allow their school to be involved in this study, and one special classroom teacher returning their signed consent form after seeking further clarification from the investigator on the aims and purpose of this study. This participant opted for an email interview.

Three special primary school teachers from three different special schools took part in this investigation. Sienna (pseudonym) had been teaching for eight years and during that time she had taught five or six dual enrolled students. Isaac (pseudonym) had been teaching for three years, and was currently teaching two dual enrolled students for the first time. Elliot (pseudonym) has taught six dual enrolled students over the course of 11 years. Both Elliot and Isaac had taught dual enrolled students in middle school, as did Sienna, however, she taught one dual enrolled student during their foundation year, or first year of primary education.

3.6 *Data collection*

3.6.1 *Interviews*

Each teacher participated in one interview that went no longer than 30-minutes. Each interview was audio recorded, except for the email interview, and later transcribed. Each teacher participant received a copy of their transcribed interview to read and alter if they wished; however, only minor grammatical corrections were made. The participant who opted for an email interview was not given the option to

read and amend their responses as they had written, edited and submitted their responses to the investigator.

The semi-structured interviews allowed the researcher to develop specific questions (Appendix K) that were appropriate to meeting the aims of the study and allowed for some flexibility to pursue unexpected data that emerged through open-ended questioning, as well as to probe for clarity either directly during the face-to-face interview or via email correspondence (Creswell, 2014; Grey, 2014; O’Leary, 2014). The semi-structured format also provided the participants with an opportunity to share their views so that their experiences could be more clearly understood (Lloyd, Gatherer & Kalsy, 2006; Tangen, 2009). The flexibility of this approach made it possible to directly capture the participants’ perspectives in order to answer the research question (Lloyd et al., 2006).

3.7 Data analysis

IPA is a qualitative approach to data analysis that is theoretically linked to phenomenology and stems from a constructivist epistemology (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Pringle et al., 2011; Smith, 2011). IPA aims to capture and explore how people make sense of their experiences, and generally involves an in-depth and detailed examination and analysis of a particular case within its particular context (Larkin, Watts & Clifton, 2006; Pringle et al., 2011; Reid, Flowers & Larkin, 2005; Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009; Smith, 2011). IPA is the study of personal experience and hermeneutics, the theory of interpretation (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). In order to understand each participant’s experience, one must first attend closely to his or her understanding of the situation. From here, the researchers can attempt to interpret, or make sense of the participant’s sense-making. This two-fold process is referred to as double hermeneutics (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009; Pringle et al., 2011). In this way, IPA is idiographic (Larkin, Watts & Clifton, 2006; Pringle et al., 2011; Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009) and focuses on knowing what an experience is like from the perspective of the individuals involved in the study.

Each individual interview was transcribed, read and re-read prior to making detailed and comprehensive initial notes (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). The focus of the initial noting was on the participants’ explicit meaning and the things that appeared to matter most to them. This resulted in a set of descriptive comments that concentrated on the content of what was said and the topic of the discussions (Table

3.1) (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). More interpretative initial noting explored the use of language, the context, and identified abstract concepts. This resulted in a set of linguistic comments which focused on exploring the specific use of language, and a set of comments that were focused at a more conceptual level (Table 3.1) (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). A “...micro-analysis of a few words...” (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009, p. 105) helped to identify underlying and recurrent issues that connected each theme, or part, back to the whole, and the whole back to each part. This dynamic relationship is referred to as the hermeneutic circle, and the iterative process is “...a key tenant of an IPA analysis...” (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009, p. 28). The provisional notes were then used to identify emergent themes and these themes were then examined in order to identify connections across the emergent themes. This involved a process of abstraction, polarisation, contextualisation, numeration and function (Table 3.2) (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). Each case underwent this same process before identifying patterns across the cases and then refining themes (Figure 3.2). Braun and Clarke (2006) suggested that a “... theme captures something important about the data in relation to the research question, and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set” (p. 82). With this in mind, at the forefront of determining the themes was the question “...whether [the theme] captured something important in relation to the overall research question” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 82): How can teachers contribute to a positive educational experience for students with a dual enrolment across a mainstream and a special setting?

Table 3.1 *Example of each comment type used during the initial noting phase*

Original Transcript	Initial Comments	Type of Comment
<i>Sienna:</i> ...it's [dual enrolment] quite common...it's probably not encouraged... and there's definitely been less [dual enrolments] in the last few years. <i>Interviewer:</i> Why do you think it is not encouraged? <i>Sienna:</i> Well, sometimes we feel that	Slow and considered response. Dual enrolment is discouraged.	Descriptive
	Use of the word 'we.' Can consistency be achieved across educational settings?	Linguistic
	If schools actively	Conceptual

the kids do better if they're meant, if they're suited to the school, that they cope better with the consistency of being in the one class all week.	discourage dual enrolment then what informs parental decision-making processes when considering this type of arrangement for their child?	
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Table 3.2 *Categories used to identify emergent themes*

Categories used to identify emergent themes	
Abstraction	Identifying patterns by putting like with like and then developing a new name for the cluster (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009).
Polarization	Identifying patterns by looking for oppositional relationships (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009).
Contextualization	Identifying patterns by looking at the contextual, temporal or narrative elements within the analysis (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009).
Numeration	Identifying patterns by looking at the frequency in which the theme appears (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009).
Function	Identifying patterns by looking for the specific function of the narrative (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009).

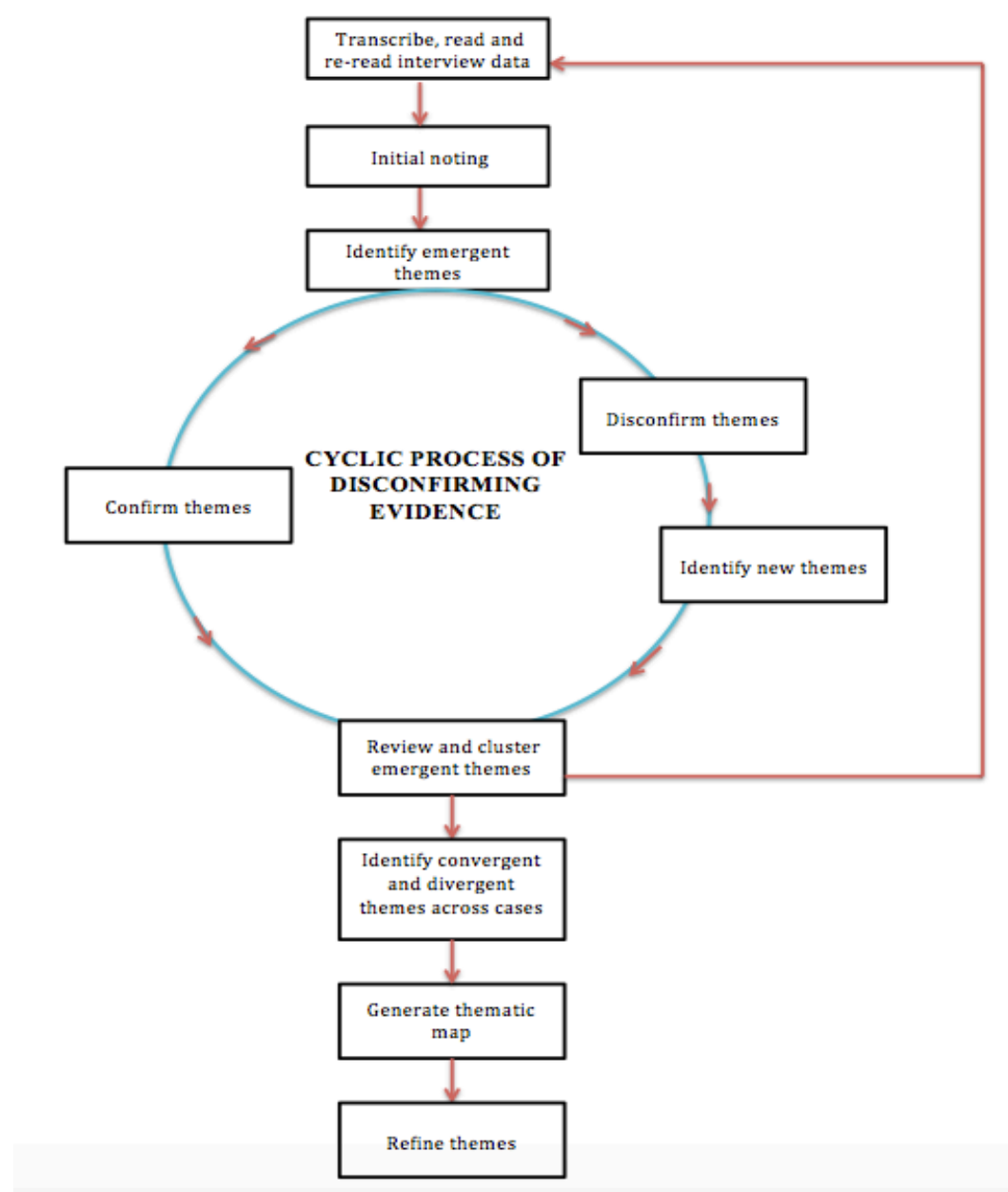
3.8 *Data rigour and validity*

Exploring personal experiences from multiple perspectives can make it difficult to determine research validity. The choice of validity procedures was governed by the research design. Based on the literature review, preliminary themes were established and were centered on a person's innate desire for competency, relatedness, and autonomy, and on self-determination theory (Carter, et al. 2006; Carter et al. 2008; Deci, & Ryan, 2000; Deci et al. 1991; Field et al. 1998; Field et al 2003; Palmer et al. 2004; Schumaker & Deshler, 1998; Shogren et al. 2008; Wehmeyer et al. 2000). This created an opportunity to disconfirm evidence (Creswell & Miller, 2000), and a cyclic process of searching through the data for evidence that was either consistent or disconfirming of the preconceived themes added rigour and validity to the study.

This approach also utilised the principle of dialogical reasoning (Klein & Myers, 1999), as possible contradictions between the preconceived themes were continually compared and revised against the actual findings to ensure that these assumptions did not influence the subjective interpretation of the data (Crotty, 1998).

Including the perspectives of three special teachers from three different schools allowed for rigour to be maintained as this represented a diversity of responses to the same phenomena within the same educational context, and provided nuanced and differing insight into the same experience from those who live it (Andrade, 2009; Klein & Myers, 1999; Piantanida & Garman, 2009).

Figure 3.2. Data analysis flow chart



Multiple perspectives helped to identify themes and this made it possible to verify the data through triangulation (Creswell, 2014; Creswell & Miller, 2000; O’Leary, 2014). This approach is consistent with the research design as understanding and representing subjective variations in meaning is axiological to interpretivist research and constructivism (Carter & Little, 2007; Piantanida & Garman, 2009). Accordingly, an interpretivist researcher values understanding the subjective and varied meanings people ascribed to the same event.

Thick and rich, or detailed descriptions were used to represent the context and to illustrate and contextualise the meaning constructed by the participants (Piantanida & Garman, 2009). This sensitivity to the context (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009; Yardley, 2000) should provide the reader with enough descriptive detail to achieve verisimilitude, or to improve the quality of believability in the data (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Piantanida & Garman, 2009). The inclusion of verbatim extracts provided the reader with an opportunity to verify the interpretations. This demonstrated sensitivity to the raw data and added a dimension of transparency to the investigation (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009).

3.9 *Summary*

This study is fundamentally qualitative in its approach and maintains its commitment to an in-depth understanding of personal experiences from the perspective of those involved. Case studies permit rich, detailed, and subjective accounts of dual enrolment from the perspectives of teachers, and this supports the objective of developing “ways of looking at new areas for study” (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009, p. 53) where no previous data exists.

CHAPTER FOUR

Results

4.1 Introduction

Two superordinate themes emerged from the data. The first theme, *the purpose of dual enrolment*, sets the context and rationale for dual enrolment from the perspective of the participating special school teachers. The second theme, *working as a team across educational settings*, continues to build on the context and discusses the issues that were important to the participants. Together the two themes answer the research question from the perspective of three special school teachers: How can teachers contribute to a positive educational experience for students with a dual enrolment across a mainstream and a special setting?

Verbatim excerpts from the participant's interviews are included throughout this chapter. Square brackets were added to some excerpts by the researcher to explain, provide context, or clarify what the participants said. Elliot opted for an email interview and all parenthesis within his excerpts are his own.

4.2 The purpose of dual enrolment

When reflecting on the purpose of dual enrolment, three sub-themes emerged: (1) *dual enrolment as a trial*, (2) *dual enrolment as social integration*, and (3) *dual enrolment as a compromise*.

4.2.1 Dual enrolment as a trial

All statements that referred to dual enrolment as a trial or temporary solution were coded under this theme. Although the theme emerged only three times within the data, it raised some important questions about the perceived benefits of dual enrolment from the perspective of the classroom teachers and parents.

Both Elliot and Sienna indicated that dual enrolment was a parental choice that is often used as a trial period. Elliot stated that parents chose dual enrolment to see how their child would cope in a mainstream setting.

Elliott: Reasons given were to see how they (the student) would go, to give it (mainstream) a go, that they [the parents] would regret it if they didn't give it (mainstream) a go.

Whereas Sienna indicated that dual enrolment was used to see which educational setting was a better 'fit' for the dual enrolled student.

Sienna: I would say that some of our kids who have tried dual enrolment have then stopped it, but then there have been others who have tried dual enrolment and decided that they want their child permanently in a mainstream.

Sienna later added to this notion of dual enrolment as a trial, or temporary phase, when commenting on the benefits of dual enrolment.

Sienna: ...if you have a child that is borderline, as in our enrolment criteria is based on IQ, and if they're at sort of the higher end, it may be that they will eventually be assessed and end up at mainstream anyway and I guess if they have had some experience that transition is easier.

When asked if any students had gone through their entire schooling period dual enrolled, Sienna replied 'No.'

The above excerpts describe dual enrolment as a temporary option that assists parents to make an informed, rational decision about their child's future education, rather than viewing dual enrolment as a permanent situation that spans across the student's entire schooling period.

4.2.2 Dual enrolment as social integration

Coded under this theme were statements that referred to socialising with peers in a mainstream setting. All three participants cited social integration as a reason for dual enrolment, making it the most pronounced sub-theme under the superordinate theme, *the purpose of dual enrolment*.

Sienna: Some parents will decide that they want their children to socialise with what they consider to be [indicated use of quotation marks] "normal"/mainstream peers, so they will say that the purpose is socialisation.

Elliot: They (parents) also wanted their children to socialise in a mainstream setting as well [as give mainstream a go].

Isaac: The reasons I have been given are that they [the parents] wanted the kids to socialise in mainstream school... That was the main reason, in the parents that I spoke to [in their own] words, when they are in with “normal kids”, to just get a feel for how they socialise and to be exposed to that a bit more often, at least in their schooling.

Isaac added another dimension to the concept of social integration: promoting respect for differences in mainstream settings.

Isaac: ...[dual enrolment is] particularly good for the mainstream class in terms of the way they interact with someone with a disability. It's good exposure on that...for those kids. I don't think that it is as good for the kid with the disability, personally, like just from what I have seen. It ... is very dependent on different personalities and different kids, but I definitely think that for the mainstream kids, like that being exposed to someone who is operating at a different level academically, and behaviorally, sometimes as well, it's good, it's very rounding for them as a person.

Similarly, Sienna commented that the success of dual enrolment is dependent upon the student's cognitive ability, disability, and age.

Sienna: I have found that dual enrolment has worked best for students who are closer to mainstream students in terms of IQ and social skills. The more severe their disability the more difficulty they have in coping with two settings. Also, for students with an ASD [Autism Spectrum Disorder] dual enrolment can be very challenging regardless of IQ, navigating a new, noisy, less predictable setting is very stressful for many of these students. Also age, older students are more aware of their 'difference' and may 'act out' in a mainstream setting in various ways. Additionally the ability gap becomes wider as students move up through the school. For example many of our senior students read at around a grade three level...despite being equivalent age to a year 10 or 11 student.

Interacting and socialising with mainstream students appears to be important for parents in terms of the development of their child irrespective of their child's cognitive ability, disability, personality and age. Whereas teachers tended to see personality, age, type of disability, and severity of disability as variables that impact upon the success of social integration and dual enrolment arrangements. It is worth mentioning that all three participants stated that they addressed and encouraged the development of positive peer relationships and pro-social behaviours within their own classrooms. However, Isaac commented on how a weekly absence from class and a change in classroom expectations negatively impacted upon the development of positive peer relationships for two dual enrolled students in his classroom.

Isaac: ...it has been a bit more difficult for both of those students [dual enrolled students]. I don't know why but they may be less settled... But as I said, one of the students comes back on a Tuesday after having the Monday away and he's always very difficult to begin with. He just needs a lot of reminding of what the expectations are here...and what we expect at the school. We have a pretty strong program in the school, like amongst the classrooms, particularly with this class, focusing on the pro-social behaviours... So a lot of it is about socialisation and we've seen pretty good improvements across the board, but I have to say, that the two that have been the most difficult have been the ones that been dual schooled. Now that may be completely coincidental, I don't know.

4.2.3 Dual enrolment as a compromise

Statements indicating that dual enrolment was discouraged but still accepted by the school, or statements that suggested that dual enrolment was a compromise between parents, were coded under the sub-theme *dual enrolment as a compromise*. In two cases dual enrolment was seen as a compromise between parents and the school.

Elliot: In all 6 cases it was requested by the parents and agreed to by the school, despite it not being the school's preference.

Elliot: I find it frustrating when parents want to try dual enrolment despite it not necessarily being in the best interest of the child. ...it comes down to the fact that it is what they (the

parents) want and not because it will necessarily benefit the child.

Sienna: ...it's [dual enrolment] quite common... it's probably not encouraged... and there's definitely been less [dual enrolments] in the last few years.

Interviewer: Why do you think it is not encouraged?

Sienna: Well, sometimes we feel that the kids do better if they're meant, if they're suited to the school, that they cope better with the consistency of being in the one class all week.

When giving her own opinion on dual enrolment, Sienna used the pronoun 'I'.

Sienna: I would say I was not 100% for dual enrolment. I think a lot of the time it doesn't work but it can work for certain kids.

Sienna's use of the word 'we' in the previous excerpt indicated that the decision to discourage dual enrolment was not necessarily hers alone, but one that was supported by school administration and leadership.

In one instance, dual enrolment was a compromise between parents.

Sienna: ...[a student was] going to a mainstream school because his parents have separated. So mum believes he should be here [special school] but she's keeping the peace by having him a couple of days [at a mainstream school]...

Both Elliot and Sienna stated that dual enrolment is not encouraged within their school context. Sienna acknowledged a decline in the number of dual enrolled students and attributed this to the school's influence on parental decision-making processes to ensure that students' needs are being met; whereas Elliot questions the motivation behind parental decision-making processes.

4.3 *Working as a team across educational settings*

Working as a team across educational settings was the most prominent theme within the data. Four sub-themes were identified as having captured something important in relation to answering the research question: How can teachers contribute to a positive educational experience for students with a dual enrolment across a

mainstream and a special setting? The sub-themes are: (1) *communication*, (2) *collaboration*, (3) *consistency*, and (4) *support*.

Matters concerning communication between teachers were identified a total of eleven times across the data. Collaboration between teachers was discussed ten times, and issues regarding consistency across educational settings arose five times. Although support was mentioned only twice, it was included because of the tendency to discourage dual enrolment arrangements and the possible implications this has towards supporting the teachers of dual enrolled students. Included under the category of support is the issue of time, as this was seen as a problem that could be overcome with greater support from school administration and leadership teams. Due to the interconnected nature of the sub-themes it was difficult to separate them neatly into one category. To avoid duplication some themes were placed under one sub-theme and analytic comments were used to illustrate the relationship between themes. The sub themes, *communication*, *collaboration*, *consistency*, and *support*, are discussed in the following paragraphs.

4.3.1 Communication

All statements that specifically referred to communication, and all statements where matters of communication were implied, were coded under this theme. All participants were asked whether they communicated with mainstream teachers and this has contributed to the frequency in which the theme appeared in the data.

Sienna: ...we met with them [mainstream teacher] at the start of the year and talked about... our plans and our understanding of the student and since then we've communicated about ... [a] toilet-timing program... I sent through some of the visuals that we use with him here 'cos he's got a greater percentage of enrolment here. And ILPs [individual learning plans] and reports we have shared.

Elliot: Only prior to the student starting at the mainstream school to give the teacher/school some background info. I did communicate with one of the six schools on a semi regular basis. However, this ceased to happen after a couple of months.

Isaac: We've had two of the ES [Education Support Staff] come to visit for one of the students...

Interviewer: What about the teachers? Do you have much communication with the mainstream teachers?

Isaac: Just a few emails but that's about it.

Interviewer: So, no sharing of reports or ILPs?

Isaac: I've shared my ILPs the other way across but nothing from them.

Although Sienna established a reciprocal relationship, both Isaac and Elliot experienced minimal communication from mainstream teachers. This lack of communication extended to matters concerning the development of the student's ILP.

Elliot: I have always sent our ILP to the other schools as we have had the students for the majority of the week (i.e. 3 or 4 days a week). However, I'm not sure if and how it has been used.

When asked what could be done to better support teachers of dual enrolled students, Isaac commented on the benefits of having met and communicated with support staff employed by the dual enrolled student's mainstream school.

Isaac: ...a lot of communication between the schools, between the classes [would be beneficial]. ...it was great that the ES staff came here. As I said, that made a big difference, and we could sort of see where they were coming from and we could tell them as well, like, what we see at school.

Sienna shared Isaac's reflections on the benefits of communication as a means to understanding different perspectives.

Sienna: As long as you are communicating, I think that helps, and understanding where everyone else is coming from...

Similarly, Elliot commented on the benefits of increased communication between schools and parents.

Elliot: I think it would be beneficial for staff from both schools to meet more regularly... If the schools aren't working together with the family then the goals of the student may not be met.

Elliot's comments indicated that communication and collaboration between both teachers and parents would be beneficial to ensuring students goals are being met. This is especially important given the reduced attendance at both schools. Sienna reinforced the importance of clear, regular effective communication between stakeholders when discussing the most helpful things she does to support a dual enrolled student in her classroom.

Sienna: I just think probably good communication with his [mainstream] school and with his parents.

When ruminating on the most rewarding aspect of having a dual enrolled student in her classroom, Sienna substantiated Elliot's comment that increased communication across educational settings would be beneficial for staff as well as students.

Sienna: ...it's been great communicating with my current student's school, you know, and just getting their perspective of things, and...broadening my own horizons.

The above excerpts show that communication is seen as beneficial to supporting dual enrolled students and teachers across educational settings. Only one of the three participants continued, however, to communicate with the mainstream teacher of their mutual students on a regular basis.

4.3.2 Collaboration

Coded under this theme were statements that referred to collaboration and statements where collaboration was implied. As already discussed under the sub-theme, *communication*, each participant prepared their own ILP and each shared their document with the mainstream teacher. This was not always reciprocated, as was the case for both Elliot and Isaac. Isaac did, however, collaborate with one mainstream teacher.

Isaac: We just use our assessments and set our goals from here, and they've [mainstream teachers] looked at that. The teacher that I have been in touch with more often has been saying can you help us with what we are going to teach him.

Even so, Isaac still acknowledged that ‘...a lot more collaboration would be ideal...’

When asked: what was the most rewarding aspect of educating a dual enrolled student, Isaac indicated that a lack of collaboration inhibited the opportunities to create positive learning experiences, positive behaviour change, and pro-social behaviours.

Isaac: I’m not sure. I don’t know actually... I don’t think that there’s any difference that I have noticed in terms of rewards with it. ...[if] there was a lot more engagement from both schools, almost like a team around the child across the two schools you could probably see a little bit of difference [between students enrolled fulltime in a special school and dual enrolled students]... that would probably lead to more...

Although Isaac and Elliot showed an awareness of the benefits associated with active collaboration, minimal communication and collaboration is taking place.

4.3.3 Consistency

All statements that referred to consistency, and all statements where matters of consistency were implied were coded under this theme.

Sienna discussed her school’s tendency to discourage dual enrolment due to a lack of consistency across educational settings. Below are some excerpts from Sienna’s interview that elaborated on the difficulties of inconsistent programs and inconsistent ILP.

Sienna: We might use a different reading program to what a mainstream would use... So, we’re not going to change our reading program and they’re not going to change theirs. ... that’s a difficulty because it could confuse a child.

Sienna: For example, our reading program is entirely based on teaching the sounds first rather than the letter names whereas in mainstream, for example, children will learn the names and sounds hopefully together. But a lot of our kids can’t cope with that amount of information at the pace it is presented at mainstream. So, it can actually cause difficulties for them [dual enrolled students].

Both Elliot and Sienna stated that the biggest challenge they face in educating a dual enrolled student is trying to achieve the student's ILP goals when they attended their school on a part-time basis.

Elliot: Trying to achieve the student's goals for their ILP when they may only be attending 3 school days a week.

Sienna: I think it is making sure we achieve everything we want to in the days that we have them here. You know especially when its, if we got a smaller percentage, you know it's unrealistic to have a full ILP cos you don't get the consistency, you don't get to reinforce the concepts across the week.

4.3.4. Support

Coded under this theme were statements that referred to ways teachers were, or could be, supported in educating dual enrolled students. Added to this were all statements that referred to a lack of time to work as a team across educational settings. Time to collaborate was a concern for two of the participants, and an issue that could be overcome with support from school administration and leadership teams across both educational settings.

All three participants were asked what could be done to better support them in educating dual enrolled students. Sienna responded after a reflective pause.

Sienna: I don't know really.

The question was rephrased and Sienna was asked what kind of supports she currently received.

Sienna: Well, nothing in particular. It's just this is what it is ...

Acceptance of the situation for what it is and an acceptance of how the program is currently implemented into schools indicated a sense of helplessness and a lack of support. Isaac's comments were similar to Sienna's in that he received little support, however; he had a clearer idea of what could be done to better support him in educating dual enrolled students.

Isaac: There's been no extra allowances, no differences from any other student; I guess is the short answer. So, the only thing I wish I could've had would be, because I am a new teacher as well and this is the first experience I have had [with teaching dual enrolled students] even just conversations like this where you just get ideas and just go, 'oh, I could do this instead, and maybe we could do it this way.' Yeah, so maybe being talked through the process would've been helpful. Like from the start and just say 'look this is the go...these are the sort of things you can do, or not do,' that sort of support would probably be what I would've needed...

In response to the question of what could be done to better support teachers of dual enrolled students, Elliot discussed the benefits of meeting more regularly with mainstream staff and acknowledged a lack of time as an impediment to better communication and collaboration.

Elliot: I think it would be beneficial for staff from both schools to meet more regularly, however I do understand that this is very difficult to achieve in a busy school environment.

Isaac also discussed how a lack of time impacted upon his ability to communicate and collaborate across educational settings.

Isaac: In a perfect world, if we all had heaps of time and heaps of energy and all the resources you could probably make it a real good strong program but I just don't, like I can't see it happening within teaching as it is.

4.4 *Summary*

The interview data revealed two super-ordinate themes: *the purpose of dual enrolment* and, *working as a team across educational settings*. A more in-depth and interpretative analysis of the research findings is presented in the next chapter as we attempt to understand the issues that arose within the context of this investigation and from the perspective of special teachers. This in turn, will help to determine how teachers can contribute to a positive educational experience for students with a dual enrolment across a mainstream and a special setting.

CHAPTER FIVE

Discussion

5.1 *Introduction*

This chapter presents an in-depth interpretative analysis of the research findings, with links between the results, the research question, and the literature presented in Chapter Two. The limitations of this investigation are discussed and directions for future research are suggested. A brief summary of the contributions of this investigation to the field of research concludes this chapter.

5.2 *Discussion of the findings from this investigation*

The findings from this investigation relative to the research question: How can teachers contribute to a positive educational experience for students with a dual enrolment across a mainstream and special setting? showed that three main purposes for dual enrolment from the perspective of the participating special education teachers: (1) *dual enrolment as a trial*, (2) *dual enrolment as social integration*, and (3) *dual enrolment as a compromise*. Age and awareness of ‘difference’ was seen to be problematic, as was the complex changes to relationships and routines. Four key characteristics that enable best practice across settings were discussed, and time was noted as a probable explanation for the lack of collaboration between teachers.

Underpinning the purpose of dual enrolment arrangements was the decision-making process of parents. As discussed by Mann, Cuskelly, and Moni (2015) the degree to which parents feel they are free to choose a school, and advice from professionals in making informed choices, impacts upon parental decision-making processes. Mann, Cuskelly, and Moni (2015) reported that teacher beliefs and the tendency to discourage enrolments often restricted the freedom of parents to choose a school. The findings from this investigation somewhat mirrored that of Mann, Cuskelly, and Moni (2015). Both Elliot and Sienna stated that dual enrolment is not encouraged within their school context. Sienna acknowledged a recent decline in the number of dual enrolled students at her school, and attributed this to the schools influence on parental decision-making. Determining whether parents have access to reliable information regarding dual enrolment, and the extent to which *Dual enrolment as a compromise* was a directly related to the school’s influences on

parental decision-making process, was beyond the scope of this investigation, but may be important for future researchers to investigate.

Dual enrolment as social integration highlighted one aspect of self-determination theory that appears to be important to parents of dual enrolled students, that being relatedness. Self-determination theory posits that experiencing a sense of belongingness is an innate human desire. Ensuring dual enrolled students have opportunities to connect and interact with peers in a meaningful ways is one way teachers can contribute to a positive educational experience for dual enrolled students across educational settings. All three participants briefly discussed how they supported and encouraged positive peer relationships within their classrooms. Isaac was the only participant to suggest that dual enrolment was a hindrance to developing more positive peer relationships and less encouraging of pro-social behaviours. Similarly, Sienna identified age and awareness of ‘difference’ to be problematic, and like Moni and Hay (2012), she discussed the challenges some students with disabilities faced navigating relationships and routines. Deci et al. (1991) and Eisenman et al. (2015) discussed the importance of autonomy in developing students’ self-efficacy, or the belief in one’s self to succeed in certain situations.

The findings from this investigation revealed a lack of communication between teachers, consistency across settings, and an unwillingness to change or modify existing programs. Yet, fundamental to creating a sense of belonging and promoting positive social interactions is facilitating active participation (Voltz, Brazil & Ford, 2001). This can be achieved through autonomy-supportive programs that boost students’ sense of competency and self-efficacy (Eisenman et al., 2015). For dual enrolled students, autonomy-supportive programs would need to be implemented across educational settings in order to boost student’s sense of self-efficacy.

Autonomy-supportive programs may be especially important within the context of mainstream schools as experiencing academic success alongside mainstream peers further increases students’ sense of self-efficacy (Eisenman et al., 2015). This in turn, can lead to social, emotional and behavioral success in the classroom. The dynamic interrelationship between relatedness, competency and autonomy also suggests that it is not possible to achieve relatedness without also addressing students’ sense of autonomy and competency within and across educational settings. This is especially important to note given that dual enrolment is seen as a means to social integration, and given the vulnerability of some students

with disabilities to poorer psychosocial adjustment (Hughes et al., 2014), which includes problems such as depression, anxiety, loneliness, and anti-social behaviour. Isaac's statement that integrating students into mainstream school is more beneficial to mainstream students than students with disabilities, and Sienna's remark on the use of different reading programs across educational settings implies that integration is more a matter of integrating the student into general and special education rather than integrating mainstream and special education systems to accommodate for diversity and individual need (Voltz, Brazil & Ford, 2001). Carter et al. (2008) found that the shared priorities of special and mainstream teachers afforded optimism in their abilities to align curriculum and planning to meet individual need; however, this investigation revealed that, in some contexts, little to no communication and minimal collaboration took place between teachers across settings. Comments made by Isaac suggested that the best way to support teachers is to create time and space that allows for greater communication, collaboration and engagement across educational settings. Scheduling parent/teacher meetings where both teachers are present might be one way to foster greater communication and collaboration amongst teachers, parents and dual enrolled students. This in turn could facilitate the development of positive learning experiences for dual enrolled students and positive teaching experiences for teachers of dual enrolled students.

Communication between teachers, parents and the student, as well as tailored intervention plans were identified in the literature review as beneficial to the successful transition of secondary school students with disabilities (Maras & Aveling, 2006). This current study found that the student's ILPs were developed independently and without much collaboration between the teachers of dual enrolled students. One possible way that teachers could contribute to a positive educational experience for dual enrolled students is to collaboratively develop one ILP, or tailored intervention plan, with the dual enrolled student, their parents, and both teachers. All three participants discussed and acknowledged the importance of communication. Despite this, only Sienna continued to communicate with the mainstream teacher of their mutual student. With the exception of Isaac who provided some assistance to the mainstream teacher of one of his dual enrolled students, each teacher developed their own ILP. Like Isaac, Sienna provided some guidance and support to encourage the inclusion of one of her dual enrolled students into the mainstream setting. An explanation for this result could be the limited communication amongst the

participants and mainstream teachers, and it is possible to attribute this to a lack of time.

Disability specific teaching skills and access to special education expertise is seen as a valuable way to support teachers and promote inclusion in mainstream classrooms (Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2001; Pearce et al., 2010). Similarly, co-teaching is seen as one way to bridge the gap between the content knowledge of mainstream teachers and the expertise of special teachers (Strieker, Gills, & Zong, 2013). Special teachers are a valuable resource in supporting inclusion; however the findings of the present study suggest that the lack of communication and collaboration between some teachers is severely limiting their potential to do more to support dual enrolled students. Again, the findings from this investigation point to a lack of time as a possible explanation, which was a concern for both Isaac and Elliot, and was described as a barrier to inclusive secondary schools (Pearce & Forlin, 2005).

Sienna and Elliot stated that the biggest challenge they faced in educating a dual enrolled student is trying to achieve the student's ILP goals in the reduced amount of time they attended school. Compounding this is the potential for the amount of time it takes to teach students with mild intellectual disabilities to exceed the amount of time allocated to secondary classes (Schumaker & Deshler, 1998; Weiss & Lloyd, 2002). As previously discussed, each teacher developed their own ILP for the same student independently of one another. As this investigation focused on the perspectives of special school teachers it was not possible to ascertain whether consistency is more a practical matter that could be resolved through greater communication, collaboration and careful planning. Future work should aim to determine the extent to which greater consistency could be achieved if teachers shared one ILP document across educational settings, and whether this would lead to improved learning outcomes.

5.3 *Recommendations for practice*

The findings from this study have a number of important implications for future practice. Four key characteristics that enable best practice across setting were defined. These are: *communication, collaboration, consistency, and support*. Teachers are encouraged to work as a team to accommodate individual need across settings; however, greater support from administrative staff is needed in order to achieve this outcome.

As discussed in the literature review, there are many potential and unexplored benefits to dual enrolment that go beyond simply assisting parents in determining the best educational fit for their child. Social integration was the most frequently given reason for dual enrolment. The reciprocal nature of self-determination suggests that it is not possible to achieve relatedness without also addressing students' sense of autonomy and competency within and across educational settings. It thus can be suggested that one way teachers can contribute to positive educational experiences for dual enrolled students is to include instruction that promotes self-determination (problem-solving, self-management, decision-making, goal setting, choice making, self-awareness and self-advocacy). This needs to occur within both educational contexts, and all programs should offer students choices, reduce teacher control, acknowledge feelings, and make available resources that facilitate decision-making and assists with the independent completion of tasks.

5.4 *Limitations of this investigation*

This study has several limitations that should be taken into account when interpreting the findings. The number and type of eligible participants who volunteered limited this investigation. It was originally anticipated that data would be collected from both mainstream and special school teachers, and dual enrolled students. Though a number of attempts were made to recruit participants from this wider pool, the time constraints of an Honour's project limited recruitment to special school teachers who were willing to share their experiences of dual enrollment. The small number of participants who represented only special school perspectives, and the use of IPA means that caution should be exercised in generalising the findings. Instead, the reader must assess and evaluate the transferability of the research findings to their specific context (see Chapter 3, section 3.5.2 *Recruitment process*).

5.5 *Directions for future research*

Further research exploring the impact of administrative support on parental decision-making processes, administrative support for the teachers of dual enrolled students, and teacher beliefs, is needed to determine the extent to which views of school staff negatively impact upon the inclusion of dual enrolled students and the success of dual enrolment arrangements for students with disabilities. Future research should also focus on the decision-making process of parents, who either opt for or

against dual enrolment, and whether there is access to reliable information regarding dual enrolment. This may help to illuminate why parents view dual enrolment as a temporary option that enables them to decide which educational setting is a better fit for their child. Similarly, exploring parental decision-making processes may explain why dual enrolment is perceived to be a compromise between parents and the schools involved.

Future investigations should also focus on time and space, and the development of ILP documents for dual enrolled students. It would seem important for example, to determine whether it is possible to create time and space that allows for greater communication, collaboration and engagement across educational settings. This requires further investigation involving the perspectives of mainstream and special school teachers, and school administrative staff. Further research is also required to establish whether developing and sharing one ILP document across educational settings is practical, and whether doing so would result in greater academic success, improved psychosocial adjustment, and a heightened sense of self-efficacy.

Of primary concern is whether dual enrolment, as it is currently being implemented, is in fact, best practice. To determine this, studies such as the present one need to be replicated and expanded to include the perspectives of special and general teachers, parents of dual enrolled students, dual enrolled students, peers of dual enrolled students, and administrative staff.

5.6 *Summary*

This study has met its intended aim and determined ways to best support dual enrolled students and improve their quality of school life. There are several important areas where this investigation makes an original contribution to research: (1) this investigation pioneered a new field of research, (2) original data supported the anticipated similarities between issues associated with inclusion in secondary schools and dual enrolment, (3) three main purposes for dual enrolment from the perspective of the participating special education teachers were identified, (4) four key characteristics that enable best practices across settings were reported, (5) literature on self-determination was synthesised and applied to the context of dual enrolment as one way to promote positive experiences, and (6) an agenda for future research on dual enrolment was outlined. This study is the first of its kind and it is hoped that

future research into dual enrolment arrangements will increase in detail and scope, leading to improved educational outcomes and quality of life for dual enrolled students.

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Appendix A

Human Research Ethics Committee (Tasmania): Full Ethics Application Approval

Social Science Ethics Officer
Private Bag 01 Hobart
Tasmania 7001 Australia
Tel: (03) 6226 2763
Fax: (03) 6226 7148
Katherine.Shaw@utas.edu.au



HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (TASMANIA) NETWORK

26 November 2015

Dr Christopher Rayner
Faculty of Education
University of Tasmania

Student Researcher: Julia Nicholas

Sent via email

Dear Dr Rayner

Re: FULL ETHICS APPLICATION APPROVAL
Ethics Ref: **H0015334 - The experiences of dual enrolled students attending mainstream and special schools: The perspectives of students and their teachers**

We are pleased to advise that the Tasmania Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee approved the above project on 25 November 2015.

This approval constitutes ethical clearance by the Tasmania Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee. The decision and authority to commence the associated research may be dependent on factors beyond the remit of the ethics review process. For example, your research may need ethics clearance from other organisations or review by your research governance coordinator or Head of Department. It is your responsibility to find out if the approval of other bodies or authorities is required. It is recommended that the proposed research should not commence until you have satisfied these requirements.

Please note that this approval is for four years and is conditional upon receipt of an annual Progress Report. Ethics approval for this project will lapse if a Progress Report is not submitted.

The following conditions apply to this approval. Failure to abide by these conditions may result in suspension or discontinuation of approval.

1. It is the responsibility of the Chief Investigator to ensure that all investigators are aware of the terms of approval, to ensure the project is conducted as approved by the Ethics Committee, and to notify the Committee if any investigators are added to, or cease involvement with, the project.

A PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

2. Complaints: If any complaints are received or ethical issues arise during the course of the project, investigators should advise the Executive Officer of the Ethics Committee on 03 6226 7479 or human.ethics@utas.edu.au.
3. Incidents or adverse effects: Investigators should notify the Ethics Committee immediately of any serious or unexpected adverse effects on participants or unforeseen events affecting the ethical acceptability of the project.
4. Amendments to Project: Modifications to the project must not proceed until approval is obtained from the Ethics Committee. Please submit an Amendment Form (available on our website) to notify the Ethics Committee of the proposed modifications.
5. Annual Report: Continued approval for this project is dependent on the submission of a Progress Report by the anniversary date of your approval. You will be sent a courtesy reminder closer to this date. **Failure to submit a Progress Report will mean that ethics approval for this project will lapse.**
6. Final Report: A Final Report and a copy of any published material arising from the project, either in full or abstract, must be provided at the end of the project.

Yours sincerely

Katherine Shaw
Executive Officer
Tasmania Social Sciences HREC

Appendix B

Permission to conduct research in Victorian government schools



Department of
Education & Training
Strategy & Review Group

2 Treasury Place
East Melbourne Victoria 3002
Telephone: 03 9637 2000
DX210083

2015_002946

Mrs Julia Nicholas
Education
University of Tasmania
20 Sidney Nolan Place
PAKENHAM 3180

Dear Mrs Nicholas

Thank you for your application of 17 December 2015 in which you request permission to conduct research in Victorian government schools titled *The experiences of dual enrolled students attending mainstream and special schools: The perspectives of students and their teachers*.

I am pleased to advise that on the basis of the information you have provided your research proposal is approved in principle subject to the conditions detailed below.

1. The research is conducted in accordance with the final documentation you provided to the Department of Education and Training.
2. Separate approval for the research needs to be sought from school principals. This is to be supported by the Department of Education and Training approved documentation and, if applicable, the letter of approval from a relevant and formally constituted Human Research Ethics Committee.
3. The project is commenced within 12 months of this approval letter and any extensions or variations to your study, including those requested by an ethics committee must be submitted to the Department of Education and Training for its consideration before you proceed.
4. As a matter of courtesy, you advise the relevant Regional Director of the schools or governing body of the early childhood settings that you intend to approach. An outline of your research and a copy of this letter should be provided to the Regional Director or governing body.
5. You acknowledge the support of the Department of Education Training in any publications arising from the research.
6. The Research Agreement conditions, which include the reporting requirements at the conclusion of your study, are upheld. A reminder will be sent for reports not submitted by the study's indicative completion date.

Your details will be dealt with in accordance with the Public Records Act 1973 and the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014. Should you have any queries or wish to gain access to your personal information held by this department please contact our Privacy Officer at the above address.



I wish you well with your research. Should you have further questions on this matter, please contact Youla Michaels, Project Support Officer, Insights and Evidence Branch, by telephone on (03) 9637 2707 or by email at michaels.youla.y@edumail.vic.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

Joyce Cleary
Director
Insights and Evidence

/02/2016

Appendix C

Human Research Ethics Committee (Tasmania): Amendment approval

Dear Dr Rayner

Ethics Ref No: H0015334

Project title: The experiences of dual enrolled students attending mainstream and special schools: The perspectives of students and their teachers.

This email is to confirm that the following amendment was approved by the Deputy Chair of the Tasmania Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee on 10/8/2016:

- Additional process to enable data to be gathered solely from the perspective of teachers/educators who are willing to share their experiences and views on the topic of dual enrolment.
- Revised Principal Information Letter, Teacher Information Sheet and Teacher Consent Form.

All committees operating under the Human Research Ethics Committee (Tasmania) Network are registered and required to comply with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (NHMRC 2007, updated May 2015).

This email constitutes official approval. If your circumstances require a formal letter of amendment approval, please let us know.

Should you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards
Katherine

Katherine Shaw

Executive Officer, Social Sciences HREC
Office of Research Services | Research Division
University of Tasmania
Private Bag 1
Hobart TAS 7001
T +61 3 6226 2763
[www.utas.edu.au/research]www.utas.edu.au/research



CRICOS 00586B

Appendix D

Permission to conduct research in Victorian government schools: Amendment approval

Dear Julia,

The modifications to your project are approved subject to the terms outlined in the original letter of approval, and as approved by the relevant HREC.

Kind regards,

Joseph Besford

Research and Analytics Officer

Strategic Evaluation and Evidence | Performance and Evaluation Division

📍: Level 3, 33 St. Andrews Place, East Melbourne, VIC 3002 | ✉️: besford.joseph.j@edumail.vic.gov.au | ☎️: (03) 9637 3584



Appendix E

Teacher information and consent form, special school



FACULTY OF EDUCATION

School of Education, University of Tasmania, Private Bag 66, Hobart, Tasmania, 7001, Australia.
Tel: +61 3 6226 2546; Fax: +61 3 6226 2569

Teacher information letter, special school

The experiences of dual enrolled students attending mainstream and special schools: The perspectives of students and their teachers.

Invitation

Dear Teacher,

You are invited to participate in a study that explores the experiences of dual enrolled students attending a mainstream and special school. This study is being conducted by Julia Nicholas, a Bachelor of Education (Primary) Honours Student of the University of Tasmania, under the supervision of Dr Christopher Rayner and Dr Nadia Ollington.

What is the purpose of the study?

The purpose of the study is to investigate the ways teachers provide dual enrolled students with access to quality educational programs. The study aims to explore the ways teachers support dual enrolled students in their classrooms and from the perspectives of both the teachers and the student.

Why have I been invited to participate?

You have been selected to participate in the study because you are currently teaching a dual enrolled student with disabilities on a part-time basis.

What will I be asked to do?

If you consent to participate in this study, you will be invited to contribute data in the following ways:

- by providing the researcher with a copy of the dual enrolled students Individual Learning Plans;
- by completing a short, questionnaire;
- by having your teaching observed; and
- by participating in an audio-recorded interview.

You will also be asked to distribute information sheets and consent forms to the legal guardians of the dual enrolled student. Details of the above activities are provided below. However, if you would like the opportunity to discuss this in more detail, and in person, you can contact the investigator directly (contact details are provided below, under the heading ‘*What if I have questions about this study?*’).

Individual Learning Plan

The Individual Learning Plan that you have designed specifically for the student, and in collaboration with the Student Support Group, will provide the investigator with an insight into the students learning goals, and an understanding of the accommodations and modifications that have been made to your instructional practices that address the students individual needs, engages them in learning, and contributes to the development of self-determined behaviours. The information contained in the document will then inform the structure of the classroom observations and will assist the investigator to identify themes to discuss during the interviews.

Questionnaire

You will be invited to complete a short questionnaire that asks you to rank seven skills that are associated with developing self-determination in students with disabilities in order of importance, and then rank the frequency to which you include classroom instruction on developing the seven skills in one school week.

Observations

The investigator will observe three sessions, each session being up to 120 minutes. The observations will be unobtrusive and will be conducted by the investigator while the students are engaged in classroom activities that you have planned as part of your usual classroom experiences. The investigator will work with you to plan classroom visits on days and times that best fit in with your schedule.

The observations will be structured and purposeful, and will focus on the following themes:

- Peer relationships and social interactions.
- Self-determination skills and behaviour.

The investigator may take photographs of the participating students work, any visual supports (e.g. individual timetables, reward charts) and physical spaces, during the observations to act as prompts or to aid comprehension during the student interview. The images will not include any information that may identify the school, the classroom teacher, the participating student, or any other student present on the day.

Audio recorded interviews

You will be invited to participate in an interview with the investigator at a mutually convenient time. The interview will take no longer than 50 minutes and will be audio recorded and transcribed. During the interview, the investigator will invite you to respond to questions that have arisen from the analysis of the student’s ILP, your responses to the questionnaire, and the observations of teaching and learning experiences. Following are some examples of the types of questions to which you may be invited to respond:

1. What information do you use to inform the development of the student’s ILP?
2. How important do you think it is that the student be involved in developing their ILP?

3. Does the student contribute to discussions to determine accommodations?
4. Do you talk to the student about his/her goals?
5. How do you prepare the student to identify and set personal goals?
6. How would you describe your approach to teaching self-determination skills?
7. How do you support and encourage the development of positive peer relationships?
8. Do you communicate with the students other teacher?
9. What do you think are the most helpful things you do to support the student's education?
10. What can be done to better support you in educating dual enrolled students?

You will be offered the option to read and amend the transcripts of your own interview.

What will the participating student be asked to do?

The student will be invited to participate in an audio recorded interview that will take no longer than 20 minutes. The student interview will be held at the school chosen by the student (or by the participating student's legal guardian) at a time that fits best with their schedule, and the schedule of the classroom teacher. The student will have the opportunity to invite another person to be present with them during the interview, for example, a parent, support person or classroom teacher. The student interview will be highly flexible in its approach and in the delivery of questions, which will be dependant upon the student's level of receptive and expressive language skills, cognitive ability and concentration span, on the day. The questions asked during the student interview will focus on capturing what it is that the classroom teachers and their peers do that helps the student while at school, and what the student does to help themselves while at school. The student will be asked what they would like their classroom teachers and their peers to do to help them while at school. The student will also be invited to share their thoughts and feelings about attending two schools.

Are there any possible benefits from participation in this study?

The study will give you an opportunity to examine, discuss and reflect upon your own teaching practices, and the research findings, to identify ways to promote, enhance and facilitate the development of dual enrolled students self-determination, and to identify ways to provide students with opportunities and supports to become psychologically empowered and autonomous individuals. The study also provides dual enrolled students with an opportunity to share and express their views and perspectives about matters which affect them, and which could improve their quality of school life. As there is no literature that explores the experiences of dual enrolled students, your participation in the study will be a valuable contribution to research which focuses on improving the educational experiences of dual enrolled students with disabilities.

Are there any possible risks from participation in this study?

Although it is not anticipated, there is a chance that you may feel anxious during the interview or during observations when your actions and responses are being closely observed. During the interviews you can decline to answer any or all questions or ask that the interview cease at any time without any explanation or consequence. Similarly you may ask that any observation cease at any time without explanation or consequence. You will be able to view and amend interview transcripts and ask that any unprocessed part of the data or all unprocessed data that you have contributed be withdrawn from the study at any point during the project. If you experience any discomfort as a result of any aspect of this research I can

arrange for counseling or other support through the university, on your request, at no cost to you. Alternatively, you are able to access free counseling provided through the Department of Education, Employee Assistance Program (EAP) by calling 1300 361 008.

What if I change my mind during or after the study?

If you decide to decline your participation at any time, you may do so without providing an explanation. You will be able to view and amend your own interview transcripts and ask that any unprocessed part of the data or all unprocessed data that you have contributed be withdrawn from the study at any point during the project.

What will happen to the information when this study is over?

All electronic data will be stored on a password-protected computer. All electronic data will be uploaded to a secure password protected University server. All data will be retained for 5 years, after which it will be securely disposed of in accordance with the University of Tasmania's Management of Research Data Policy.

How will the results of the study be published?

After the data collection, the investigator will provide a summary report of the data to participating schools, teachers and the participating students' legal guardian. Upon request, you will be provided with the thesis in electronic form by the end of the 2016 school year. The thesis will also be available to the participating students' legal guardian. Teachers, students and schools will be anonymous in all publications of the results. Pseudonyms will be used when referring to quotes from interview transcripts and in descriptions from lesson observations in all publications of the results of this study.

What if I have questions about this study?

If you have any questions relating to this study, please feel free to contact the student investigator, Julia Nicholas via email on julian0@utas.edu.au. Alternatively, you can contact the student investigators supervisory team, Dr Christopher Rayner via email on Christopher.Rayner@utas.edu.au, or Dr Nadia Ollington via email on nadia.ollington@utas.edu.au.

If you have concerns or complaints about the conduct of this study, please contact the Executive Officer of the HREC (Tasmania) Network on +61 3 6226 7479 or email human.ethics@utas.edu.au. The Executive Officer is the person nominated to receive complaints from research participants. Please quote ethics reference number H0015334.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this study.

If you wish to take part in it, please sign the attached consent form.

This information sheet is for you to keep.

School of Education, University of Tasmania, Private Bag 66, Hobart, Tasmania, 7001, Australia.
Tel: +61 3 6226 2546; Fax: +61 3 6226 2569

Teacher consent form, special school

**The experiences of dual enrolled students attending mainstream and special schools:
The perspectives of students and their teachers.**

1. I have read and understood the Information Sheet for this study.
2. The nature and possible effects of the study have been explained to me.
3. I understand that the study involves:
 - providing the researcher with a copy of the dual enrolled students Individual Learning Plan;
 - completing a questionnaire;
 - having my teaching observed; and
 - participating in an audio-recorded interview.
4. I understand that my participation in this study involves low risk.
5. I understand that all research data will be securely stored on password-protected computers.
6. Any questions that I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.
7. I understand that the investigator will maintain confidentiality and that any information that I supply to the investigator will be used only for the purposes of the research. I understand that in any public documents arising from this research, pseudonyms will be used for my own name and the names of my school and students.
8. I understand that the results of the study will be published so that I cannot be identified as a participant.
9. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without any effect.
10. If I so wish, I may request that any unprocessed data I have supplied be withdrawn from the research.

I hereby give consent to participate in this study.

Participant's name: _____

Participant's signature: _____

Date: _____

Statement by Investigator

- ☐ I have explained the project and the implications of participation in it to this volunteer and I believe that the consent is informed and that he/she understands the implications of participation.

If the Investigator has not had an opportunity to talk to participants prior to them participating, the following must be ticked.

- ☐ The participant has received the Information Sheet where my details have been provided so participants have had the opportunity to contact me prior to consenting to participate in this project.

Investigator's name: _____

Investigator's signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix F

Principal information letter, special school



FACULTY OF EDUCATION

School of Education, University of Tasmania, Private Bag 66, Hobart, Tasmania, 7001, Australia.
Tel: +61 3 6226 2546; Fax: +61 3 6226 2569

The experiences of dual enrolled students attending mainstream and special schools: The perspectives of students and their teachers.

Dear

My name is Julia Nicholas, I am a Bachelor of Education (Primary) Honours student at the University of Tasmania, and under the supervision of Dr Christopher Rayner and Dr Nadia Ollington, I write to you regarding the possibility of inviting the teachers of dual enrolled students, and students who are dual enrolled, to participate in my research project.

The project aims to ascertain ways teachers can provide dual enrolled students with a quality education program by asking: 'How can teachers contribute to a positive educational experience for students with a dual enrolment across a mainstream and a special setting?' As there is no literature that explores the lived experiences of dual enrolled students with disabilities and in the absence of any literature that supports teachers in taking reasonable steps to ensure dual enrolled students receive access to, and participate in, a quality educational program on the same basis as a student without a disability, the proposed research project aims to identify ways to better support teachers in meeting their legal and ethical obligations, and aims to identify ways to best support dual enrolled students and improve their quality of school life.

Data collection strategies, including Individual Learning Plans, a short questionnaire, observations (three sessions each being up to 120 minutes), and interviews, have been carefully selected to ensure minimal interruption to the daily teaching and learning schedule, and to provide an in-depth exploration of the actual lived experience of dual enrolled students. All interviews will be scheduled at a time that is mutually convenient for all those involved. The student interview will be held at the school chosen by the student (or by the participating student's legal guardian) at a time that fits best with their schedule, and the schedule of the classroom teacher. The teacher interviews will take no longer than 50 minutes and the student interviews will take no longer than 20 minutes. The student interview

will be highly flexible in its approach and the delivery of questions, which will be dependent upon the participating student's level of receptive and expressive language skills, cognitive ability and concentration span, on the day. The questions asked during the student interview will focus on capturing what it is that the classroom teachers and the participating student's peers do that helps the student while at school, and what the student does to help themselves while at school. The student will be asked what they would like their classroom teachers and their peers to do to help them while at school. The student will also be invited to share their thoughts and feelings about attending two schools. I have attached the information letters and consent forms for both the teachers and the legal guardians of the participating student, and the student consent form, which explain, in detail, the procedures involved in participating in the study, and includes a list of possible questions that may be asked during the teacher and student interviews.

This study has been approved by the Tasmanian Social Science Human Research Ethics Committee (H0015334), and by the Department of Education and Training (2015_002946).

Thank you for taking the time to consider allowing your school to assist with this study and please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further clarification via email on julian0@utas.edu.au. Would you please advise me of your decision to participate by return email?

Kind regards,

Appendix G

Parent information and consent form



FACULTY OF EDUCATION

School of Education, University of Tasmania, Private Bag 66, Hobart, Tasmania, 7001, Australia.
Tel: +61 3 6226 2546; Fax: +61 3 6226 2569

Parent/Guardian information letter

The experiences of dual enrolled students attending mainstream and special schools: The perspectives of students and their teachers.

Invitation

Dear Parent/Guardian,

My name is Julia Nicholas, I am a Bachelor of Education (Primary) Honours student at the University of Tasmania, under the supervision of Dr Christopher Rayner and Dr Nadia Ollington. I write to you to invite your child to participate in a study that explores the experiences of students attending a mainstream school and a special school on a part-time basis.

What is the purpose of the study?

The purpose of the study is to investigate the ways your child's teachers provide your child with access to quality educational programs. The study aims to explore the ways that your child's teachers support your child in their classrooms from the perspective of the classroom teachers and from your child's perspective.

Why has my child been invited to participate?

Your child has been selected to participate in the study because they attend a mainstream school and a special school on a part-time basis.

What will my child be asked to do?

If you give consent on behalf of your child, the investigator will invite you to provide advice on how best to engage your child in discussion about their voluntary participation in the study. Your child will be invited to participate in an audio recorded interview. Your child will have the opportunity to invite another person to be present with them during the interview, for example, a parent, support person or classroom teacher. The interview will be held at the school of your choice, and at a time that is mutually convenient to all those involved. The interview will take no longer than 20 minutes. If you or your child's teacher feel that 20 minutes is too long, then the interview length can be shortened or the time can be split into

two smaller, 10 minute interviews with a break in between. Your child can also request that the interview be stopped at any time and as often as they need in order to take a break. The investigator will be highly flexible in their approach and delivery of questions to ensure your child's needs are being met, and to ensure your child is given every opportunity to communicate and express their thoughts, feelings and perspective. As discussed above, the investigator will seek your advice, your child's teachers advice, and if applicable and possible, your child's speech pathologists advice on ways to phrase and present the interview questions. If your child uses picture exchange cards or augmentative or alternative communication devices, these communication methods will be used during the interview.

Following are some examples of the types of questions your child may be invited to respond to:

1. What are some of your favourite things about going to two schools?
2. Do you like attending two schools?
3. Why do you attend two schools?
4. How does going to two schools make you feel?
5. What do your teachers/peers do that helps you enjoy school?
6. What would you like your teachers/peers to do to help you enjoy school?
7. What do your teachers/peers do that helps you do your best at school?
8. What do you do that helps you to do your best at school?
9. What would you like your teachers/peers to do to help you do your best at school?
10. What do you find most difficult about going to two schools?
11. Are the rules/expectations the same at both your schools, or are they different?
12. What can your teachers do to help you remember the school rules/expectations?
13. What can you do that will help you to remember the school rules/expectations?
14. Do you have good friends at both schools?
15. What can your teachers do to help you make friends?
16. What can you do to make friends?

Before the interview begins your child will be reminded that they do not have to answer any or all of the questions and can ask that the interview stop at any time without any explanation or consequence.

The investigator may ask your child for more details or for examples when responding to the interview questions to ensure that their thoughts, feelings and perspectives are accurately reflected in the data. Your child, or the person present with your child during the interview, will be offered the option to read and amend the transcripts of your child's interview.

If you would like the opportunity to discuss the interview process in more detail prior to giving consent, you are welcome to contact the investigator directly (contact details are provided below, under the heading '*What if I have questions about this study?*').

Individual Learning Plan

The investigator seeks your consent to collect your child's Individual Learning Plan from each of your child's teachers. Your child's Individual Learning Plan will provide the investigator with an insight into the changes that your child's teachers have made to their teaching that meets your child's individual needs and contributes to the development of self-determined behaviours such as: problem-solving, self-management, decision-making, goal

setting, choice-making, self-awareness and self advocacy. The information contained in the document will also assist the investigator when conducting classroom observations (see below for further details).

Observations

The investigator will observe three classroom sessions, each session being up to 120 minutes, at each of the schools your child attends. The investigator will conduct the observations while your child and his/her peers are engaged in classroom activities that have been planned as part of their usual classroom experiences. During the observations, your child will participate in their regular classroom activities as per normal.

The observations will focus on the following themes:

- Peer relationships and social interactions;
- Self-determination skills and behaviours that are used or explicitly taught within instructional programs (e.g. problem-solving, self-management, decision-making, goal setting, choice-making, self-awareness, self advocacy).

The investigator may take photographs of your child's work, any visual supports (e.g. individual timetables, reward charts) and physical spaces, during the observations to act as prompts or to aid comprehension during their interview. The images will not include any information that may identify the your child, the school, the classroom teacher or any other student present on the day.

Are there any possible benefits from participation in this study?

The study provides your child with an opportunity to share and express his or her views and perspectives about matters which affect them, and which could improve their quality of school life. The study will also give your child's teachers an opportunity to examine, discuss and reflect upon their teaching practices, and the research findings, to identify ways to provide your child, and other dual enrolled children, with access to quality educational programs that meet their needs.

There is no research that explores the experiences of students who attend a mainstream and a special school on a part-time basis. Your child's participation in the study will be a valuable contribution to research which focuses on improving the educational experiences of dual enrolled students.

Are there any possible risks from participation in this study?

Although it is not anticipated, there is a chance that your child may feel anxious during the interview or during classroom observations. During the interviews your child can decline to answer any or all questions or ask that the interview cease at any time without any explanation or consequence. Similarly your child may ask that any observation cease at any time without explanation or consequence. The investigator will seek your advice and your child's teacher's advice on ways to identify non-verbal signals of distress and discomfort. Should the investigator become aware of these signals, or should the person present in the interview with your child become aware of these signals and inform the investigator, the interview will stop immediately. If your child experiences any discomfort as a result of any aspect of this research I can arrange for counselling or other support through the school or the university, upon their request or upon your request, and at no cost to you.

What if my child changes their mind during or after the study?

If your child decides to decline their participation at any time, they may do so without providing an explanation. Your child may ask that any unprocessed part of the data or all unprocessed data that they have contributed be withdrawn from the study at any point during the study prior to completion of the reports and thesis.

What if I change my mind during or after the study?

If you decide to decline your child's participation at any time, you may do so without providing an explanation. You will be able to ask that any unprocessed part of the data or all unprocessed data that your child has contributed be withdrawn from the study at any point during the study. This includes the information contained within your child's Individual Learning Plan.

What will happen to the information when this study is over?

All electronic data will be stored on a password-protected computer. All electronic data will be uploaded to a secure password protected University server. All data will be retained for 5 years, after which it will be securely disposed of in accordance with the University of Tasmania's Management of Research Data Policy.

How will the results of the study be published?

After the data collection, the investigator will provide a summary report of the data to you and to participating schools. Upon request, you will be provided with the thesis in electronic form by the end of the 2016 school year. The thesis will also be available to participating teachers. Teachers, students and schools will be anonymous in all publications of the results. Pseudonyms will be used when referring to quotes from interview transcripts and in descriptions from lesson observations in all publications of results of this study.

What if I have questions about this study?

If you have any questions relating to this study, please feel free to contact the student investigator, Julia Nicholas via email on julian0@utas.edu.au. Alternatively, you can contact the student investigators supervisory team, Dr Christopher Rayner via email on Christopher.Rayner@utas.edu.au, or Dr Nadia Ollington via email on nadia.ollington@utas.edu.au.

This study has been approved by the Tasmanian Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have concerns or complaints about the conduct of this study, please contact the Executive Officer of the HREC (Tasmania) Network on +61 3 6226 7479 or email human.ethics@utas.edu.au. The Executive Officer is the person nominated to receive complaints from research participants. Please quote ethics reference number H0015334.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this study.

If you wish to take part in it, please sign the attached consent form.

This information sheet is for you to keep.

School of Education, University of Tasmania, Private Bag 66, Hobart, Tasmania, 7001, Australia.
Tel: +61 3 6226 2546; Fax: +61 3 6226 2569

Parent/Guardian consent form

**The experiences of dual enrolled students attending mainstream and special schools:
The perspectives of students and their teachers.**

1. I agree that my child can take part in this research study.
2. I have read and understood the Information Sheet for this study, and any questions that I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.
3. The nature and possible effects of the study have been explained to me, and I understand that my child's participation in this study involves low risk.
4. I have discussed with my child the nature of the research and their involvement in the study
5. I understand that the investigator may be in contact with my child's speech pathologist or any support persons my child regularly has contact with while at school.
6. I understand that the investigator will be given a copy of my child's Individual Learning Plan.
7. I understand that the investigator will observe my child during his/her normal classroom programs.
8. I understand that the study involves my child's participation in an audio-recorded interview, and that my child has the opportunity to invite another person to be present with them during the interview.
9. I understand that all research data will be securely stored on password-protected computers.
10. I understand that the investigator will maintain my confidentiality and my child's confidentiality, and that any information supplied to the investigator will be used only for the purposes of the research.
11. I understand that in any public documents arising from this research, pseudonyms will be used for my child's name and the names of his/her schools and the classroom teachers.
12. I understand that my child's participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw him/her from participation, or my child may choose to withdraw his/her participation from the study, at any time without any effect.
13. I understand that I may request that any unprocessed data I have supplied, or that my child has supplied be withdrawn from the research up until September 2, 2016.

I give consent for my child to participate in this study.

Name of Child: _____

Name of Parent/Guardian giving consent: _____

Parent/Guardian's signature: _____

Date: _____

Statement by Investigator

- ☐ I have explained the project and the implications of participation in it to this volunteer and I believe that the consent is informed and that he/she understands the implications of participation.

If the Investigator has not had an opportunity to talk to participants prior to them participating, the following must be ticked.

- ☐ The participant has received the Information Sheet where my details have been provided so participants have had the opportunity to contact me prior to consenting to participate in this project.

Investigator's name: _____

Investigator's signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix H

Student information and consent form



FACULTY OF EDUCATION

School of Education, University of Tasmania, Private Bag 66, Hobart, Tasmania, 7001, Australia.
Tel: +61 3 6226 2546; Fax: +61 3 6226 2569

Student Information and Consent Form

The experiences of dual enrolled students attending mainstream and special schools: The perspectives of students and their teachers.

Dear

My name is Julia Nicholas, I am a student at the University of Tasmania, and I am training to be a teacher. I am writing to invite you to join in a study that looks at how your teachers' can help you in the classroom. You have been invited to participate because you go to two schools, and I am interested in knowing how I can help students like yourself, to do their best and be their best at school when I am their teacher.

During the study I will be visiting you three times at each of your schools to see how your teachers help you to be your best at school. I will be meeting with your classroom teachers to ask them some questions about the things they do to help you, and I would also like to meet with you and hear what you have to say about going to two schools. Some questions that I might ask you are:

1. What are some of your favourite things about going to two schools?
2. What do your teachers do that helps you to enjoy going to school?
3. What do you do that helps you to do your best at school?
4. What would you like your teachers to do to help you do your best at school?

You do not have to answer all of the questions, and if you change your mind, or you feel uncomfortable on the day that we meet, you do not have to answer any of the questions. You can tell your teacher or your parents, or you can tell me yourself, that you do not want to talk to me and that's fine. I won't be upset and you won't get into any trouble. Even if your parents and teachers have said that they want you to join in the study, you do not have to chat with me unless you want to.

If you are happy to join in the study, all you have to do is write your name and today's date below. Your mum or dad can help you do this.

Your name: _____

Date: _____

Appendix I

Amended principal information letter



FACULTY OF EDUCATION

School of Education, University of Tasmania, Private Bag 66, Hobart, Tasmania, 7001, Australia.
Tel: +61 3 6226 2546; Fax: +61 3 6226 2569

Dual enrolled students attending mainstream and special schools: The perspectives of classroom teachers.

Dear

My name is Julia Nicholas, I am a Bachelor of Education (Primary) Honours student at the University of Tasmania, and under the supervision of Dr Christopher Rayner and Dr Nadia Ollington, I write to you regarding the possibility of inviting the teachers of dual enrolled students to participate in my research project.

The project aims to ascertain ways teachers can provide dual enrolled students with access to a unified, quality education program by asking: how can teachers contribute to a positive educational experience for students with a dual enrolment across a mainstream and a special setting? As there is no literature that explores the lived experiences of dual enrolled students with disabilities, and in the absence of any literature that supports teachers in taking reasonable steps to ensure dual enrolled students receive access to, and participate in, a quality educational program on the same basis as a student without a disability, the proposed research project aims to identify ways to better support teachers in meeting their legal and ethical obligations, and aims to identify ways to best support dual enrolled students and improve their quality of school life.

Both special and general teachers have been invited to participate in this study. Teachers who currently have a dual enrolled student in their classroom and teachers who have taught a dual enrolled student in the past are invited to participate in this study. Data collection involves one 30 minute interview with the classroom teacher. Interviews can be held in person and at your school, or via Skype, telephone, or email. I have attached the teacher information letters and consent forms, which explain, in detail, the procedures involved in participating in this study and includes a list of possible questions that may be asked during the interview.

This study has been approved by the Tasmanian Social Science Human Research Ethics Committee (H0015334), and by the Department of Education and Training (2015_002946).

Thank you for taking the time to consider allowing your school to assist with this study and please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further clarification via email on julian0@utas.edu.au. Would you please advise me of your decision to participate by return email?

Kind regards,

Julia Nicholas

Appendix J

Amended teacher information and consent form



FACULTY OF EDUCATION

School of Education, University of Tasmania, Private Bag 66, Hobart, Tasmania, 7001, Australia.
Tel: +61 3 6226 2546; Fax: +61 3 6226 2569

Teacher information letter

Dual enrolled students attending mainstream and special schools: The perspectives of classroom teachers.

Invitation

Dear Teacher,

You are invited to participate in a study that explores the experiences of dual enrolled students attending a mainstream and special school. This study is being conducted by Julia Nicholas, a Bachelor of Education (Primary) Honours Student of the University of Tasmania, under the supervision of Dr Christopher Rayner and Dr Nadia Ollington.

What is the purpose of the study?

The purpose of the study is to investigate the ways teachers provide dual enrolled students with access to quality educational programs. The study aims to explore the ways teachers support dual enrolled students in their classrooms and from the perspectives of both general and special teachers.

Why have I been invited to participate?

You have been selected to participate in the study because you are currently teaching, or have taught a dual enrolled student with disabilities on a part-time basis.

What will I be asked to do?

If you consent to participate in this study, you will be invited to contribute data by participating in one audio-recorded interview.

Details are provided below. However, if you would like the opportunity to discuss this in more detail, and in person, you can contact the investigator directly (contact details are provided below, under the heading '*What if I have questions about this study?*').

Audio recorded interviews

You will be invited to participate in an interview with the investigator at a mutually convenient time. Interviews can be held in person or via Skype, telephone, or email. The interview will take no longer than 30 minutes and will be audio recorded and transcribed. Following are some examples of the types of questions to which you may be invited to respond:

1. What is the purpose of the dual enrolment?
2. Are students involved in their Student Support Group meetings and the development of their Individual Learn Plans?
3. What considerations do you need to make to your weekly planning as a result of having a dual enrolled student in your class?
4. How do you support and encourage the development of positive peer relationships?
5. What is the biggest challenge you face when educating a dual enrolled student?
6. What is the most rewarding aspect about educating a dual enrolled student?
7. What do you think are the most helpful things you do to support the student's education?
8. What can be done to better support you in educating dual enrolled students?

You will be offered the option to read and amend the transcripts of your own interview.

Are there any possible benefits from participation in this study?

The study will give you an opportunity to examine, discuss and reflect upon your own teaching practices, and the research findings, to identify ways to promote, enhance and facilitate the development of dual enrolled students self-determination, and to identify ways to provide students with opportunities and supports to become psychologically empowered and autonomous individuals. As there is no literature that explores the experiences of dual enrolled students, your participation in the study will be a valuable contribution to research which focuses on improving the educational experiences of dual enrolled students with disabilities.

Are there any possible risks from participation in this study?

Although it is not anticipated, there is a chance that you may feel anxious during the interview. During the interviews you can decline to answer any or all questions or ask that the interview cease at any time without any explanation or consequence. You will be able to view and amend interview transcripts and ask that any unprocessed part of the data or all unprocessed data that you have contributed be withdrawn from the study at any point during the project. If you experience any discomfort as a result of any aspect of this research I can arrange for counselling or other support through the university, on your request, at no cost to you. Alternatively, you are able to access free counseling provided through the Department of Education, Employee Assistance Program (EAP) by calling 1300 361 008.

What if I change my mind during or after the study?

If you decide to decline your participation at any time, you may do so without providing an explanation. You will be able to view and amend your own interview transcripts and ask that any unprocessed part of the data or all unprocessed data that you have contributed be withdrawn from the study at any point during the project.

What will happen to the information when this study is over?

All electronic data will be stored on a password-protected computer. All electronic data will

be uploaded to a secure password protected University server. All data will be retained for 5 years, after which it will be securely disposed of in accordance with the University of Tasmania's Management of Research Data Policy.

How will the results of the study be published?

After the data collection, the investigator will provide a summary report of the data to participating schools and teachers.. Upon request, you will be provided with the thesis in electronic form by the end of the 2016 school year. Teachers, students and schools will be anonymous in all publications of the results. Pseudonyms will be used when referring to quotes from interview transcripts and in descriptions from lesson observations in all publications of the results of this study.

What if I have questions about this study?

If you have any questions relating to this study, please feel free to contact the student investigator, Julia Nicholas via email on julian0@utas.edu.au. Alternatively, you can contact the student investigators supervisory team, Dr Christopher Rayner via email on Christopher.Rayner@utas.edu.au, or Dr Nadia Ollington via email on nadia.ollington@utas.edu.au.

If you have concerns or complaints about the conduct of this study, please contact the Executive Officer of the HREC (Tasmania) Network on +61 3 6226 7479 or email human.ethics@utas.edu.au. The Executive Officer is the person nominated to receive complaints from research participants. Please quote ethics reference number H0015334.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this study.

If you wish to take part in it, please sign the attached consent form.

This information sheet is for you to keep.

School of Education, University of Tasmania, Private Bag 66, Hobart, Tasmania, 7001, Australia.
Tel: +61 3 6226 2546; Fax: +61 3 6226 2569

Teacher consent form

Dual enrolled students attending mainstream and special schools: The perspectives of classroom teachers.

11. I have read and understood the Information Sheet for this study.
12. The nature and possible effects of the study have been explained to me.
13. I understand that the study involves participating in an audio-recorded interview.
14. I understand that my participation in this study involves low risk.
15. I understand that all research data will be securely stored on password-protected computers.
16. Any questions that I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.
17. I understand that the investigator will maintain confidentiality and that any information that I supply to the investigator will be used only for the purposes of the research. I understand that in any public documents arising from this research, pseudonyms will be used for my own name and the names of my school and students.
18. I understand that the results of the study will be published so that I cannot be identified as a participant.
19. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without any effect.
20. If I so wish, I may request that any unprocessed data I have supplied be withdrawn from the research.

I hereby give consent to participate in this study.

Participant's name: _____

Participant's signature: _____

Date: _____

Statement by Investigator

- ☐ I have explained the project and the implications of participation in it to this volunteer

and I believe that the consent is informed and that he/she understands the implications of participation.

If the Investigator has not had an opportunity to talk to participants prior to them participating, the following must be ticked.

- ☐ The participant has received the Information Sheet where my details have been provided so participants have had the opportunity to contact me prior to consenting to participate in this project.

Investigator's name: _____

Investigator's signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix K
Teacher interview schedule

1. How long have you been teaching?
2. What year levels have you taught?
3. What year levels have you taught a dual enrolled student?
4. How many dual enrolled students have you taught?
5. What is the purpose of the dual enrolment?
6. What reasons do parents give for wanting to dual enrol their child?
7. Do you/did you communicate with the students other teacher (mainstream teacher)?
8. What information do you use to inform the development of the student's ILP?
9. Are students involved in their SSG meetings and the development of their ILP?
10. Do you share the same ILP document across schools?
11. What considerations do you need to make to your weekly planning as a result of having a dual enrolled student in your class?
12. How do you support and encourage the development of positive peer relationships?
13. Does the student struggle to adapt their behaviour to meet the classroom expectations/rules and routines?
14. What is the biggest challenge you face when educating a dual enrolled student?
15. What is the most rewarding aspect about educating a dual enrolled student?
16. What do you think are the most helpful things you do to support the student's education?
17. What can be done to better support you in educating dual enrolled students?
18. Is there anything you would like to discuss that we haven't already talked